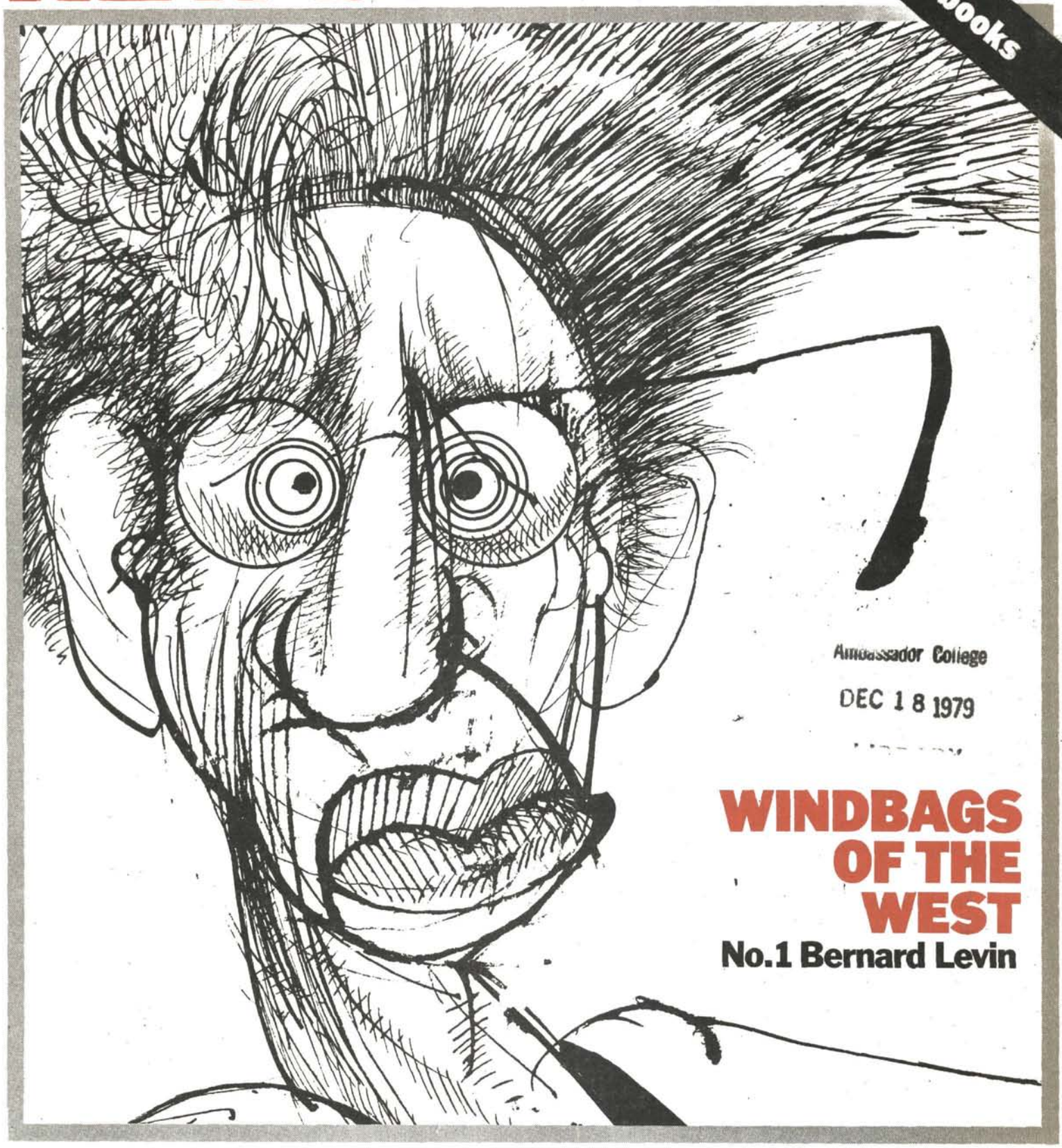
9 November 1979 35p USA $1 By Air

NEW STATESMAN

Children's books



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WINDBAGS OF THE WEST

No.1 Bernard Levin

Truth about the lamb war
The unreal world of Tory economics
East Europe's first anti-nuke success

The time-bomb in British prisons

John Spurling & Andrew Saint: the Thirties
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NEW STATESMAN

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UK £17, Overseas £18.50
Air mail:
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New Statesman
10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ
Tel: 01-405 8471 Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London WC1
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Can British industry be saved?

THE MOST ENCOURAGING thing which has happened recently for the members of the CBI, meeting in Birmingham this week, is the British Leyland ballot. Encouraging not because after a detailed and exhaustive explanation of the 'economic realities' the BL management got the agreement of the vast majority of BL workers, but encouraging because they got that support *without* having to give such an explanation. Such industrial referenda may be the way in which the CBI can cope with world recession by making workers take cuts in their real wages (in the face of accelerating inflation) and making them unemployed.

This is the price that Britain is being asked to pay, according to Tory ideology, to get the wealth creating process working again. In a similar cause, the Tory government last week announced a package of public spending cuts which are designed to make it easier for the private sector to grow. As we argue on page 712 there is little empirical evidence to support such a view of the economy. This, however, is only part of the Tories' plan. They also believe that the economy can be rejuvenated by cutting taxes on capital and, especially, higher incomes. But this idea also lacks conclusive empirical support. Some recent work,[1] which struggles manfully to support the hypothesis, concludes cautiously:

> By and large the evidence that has been reviewed places the burden of proof on those who argue that in the U.K. taxation does not act as a disincentive, especially at the margin. This, of course, does not amount to saying that the evidence about disincentive effects is overwhelming.

Quite so. But even this slightly misses the main thrust of egalitarian argument. It is not that financial incentives are unimportant – indeed at extremes, such as a universal 100 per cent tax, they must be significant – rather, the case is that they are not the *most* important ingredient in the productive process.

The Tory theory of wealth creation – in addition to believing that 'wealth' is only created in the private sector and that everything that it creates is wealth – relies heavily, almost exclusively, on the idea that people only contribute to the productive process for money. *A priori* this seems an odd idea. It assumes that benevolence, curiosity and sheer enjoyment leave people as soon as they go to work. Furthermore, it assumes that people are relatively uninfluenced by (say) the justice of the society around them or the decision-making process in the company for which they work.

History also belies the Tory idea: many of those whose discoveries and inventions had such an impact on the development of the industrial system were not motivated principally by money: Parson, developer of the steam turbine, de Havilland and, conspicuously, Fleming, the founder of the antibiotic industry, come to mind. In addition, many of Britain's most successful businesses were developed by men who were not rationally motivated: Marks and Spencer became good employers because they believed it to be right, not because they believed it would make them more money (though it has); Lewis gave his shops to his employees not because he thought it would make them more efficient, but because he believed this to be the morally correct thing to do.

In other words, the inspiration for productive activity is as likely to be moral judgments as economic self-interest; and the enrichment of company directors, or the companies under their control, is not especially likely to produce the decisions that will regenerate British industry. Although it may be true that British companies need to be more profitable to survive, the CBI's exhortation for workers to make sacrifices, so that this can be so, lacks conviction so long as its members insist on surrounding themselves with all the comfortable trimmings of a class society – such as special cars and special canteens – and virulently resist all attempts by ordinary workers to direct the course of the enterprises for which they work.

1 *Lloyd's Bank Review*, October 1979

NOTES

A butcher arrives

John Taylor writes: General Suharto of Indonesia will be making a state visit to London from 13-16 November. He comes at a time when his regime is under increasing criticism from the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations as a result of its brutal actions in East Timor. His visit also coincides with the leaking of a document produced by his government which shows that the plight of the East Timorese people is as desperate as that of the Cambodians.

The document is the result of a census of East Timor conducted at the end of 1978 by the Indonesian Government's 'Assistant of Defence and Security'. It estimates the total population at 329,271. The last known census, taken by the diocese of Dili at the end of the Portuguese colonial period, in 1974, put the total population at 688,771. Since the Indonesian Government claims that there are no more than a handful of people living in areas controlled by the national independence movement, Fretilin, it must be concluded from these government figures that approximately 359,000 people have died between 1974 and 1978. Since we know from eye-witness observers that, at most, 1,500 people died in fighting following an Indonesian-backed coup in August, 1975, the inescapable conclusion from the Indonesian census is that one half of the population have died since the Indonesian armed forces began their armed invasion in December 1975.

There is, of course, an obvious flaw in these figures, since the census does not include people living in Fretilin-held areas; however, it does tend to confirm the most recent estimates that approximately 200,000 have died, mostly from saturation bombing of cultivated areas. This is an act of genocide perpetrated by the Indonesian military government.

Despite the widespread starvation produced by Indonesian bombing, the Indonesian Government has, until recently, not allowed the International Red Cross (ICRC) to operate in East Timor, preferring its own national Red Cross which co-operates closely with the army. Even now, the ICRC is playing only an overall supervisory role, with day-to-day operations being conducted by the Indonesian Red Cross.

It can be expected that the Thatcher Government will maintain a complicitly acquiescent position during Suharto's state visit. It will also ignore other aspects of Suharto's military rule: that he came to power through physically eliminating the political

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opposition in massacres which claimed at least 500,000; that he still detains several thousand political prisoners without trial; that his troops in West Irian (West Papua New Guinea) have committed many atrocities against the indigenous population, resulting in the deaths of 90,000 since the occupation of the territory first began in 1963, under the late President Sukarno.

These will be glossed over in the interests of Britain's growing economic and political influence in Indonesia. British exports, doubling between 1972-7, were valued at £80 million in 1978, and consist mainly of machinery for Indonesia's export manufacturing sector – utilising what a recent World Bank report calls '. . . the largest remaining pool of inexpensive and relatively literate labour in East Asia'. While this sector is developing successfully, industries producing for domestic consumption are declining rapidly.

Britain's buses in danger

Mick Hamer writes: Britain's bus services will be especially badly hit by the transport spending cuts. Rural services are among the most vulnerable, threatened as they are not only by cuts in subsidy but by the withdrawal of free school transport and changes in bus licensing.

Buses' precise share of the £42 million cut in road and bus spending will not be known until the Transport Supplementary Grant settlements are announced later this month. But many services in rural counties already exist on a knife-edge and even a small reduction in their £45m subsidy could deprive large areas of the country of buses. Transport Minister Norman Fowler has already made it plain that he will not lean on rural counties to maintain a decent level of bus subsidy: the last government cajoled counties to keep up their subsidies and tried to stamp out the practice of counties claiming money from the government for buses and then spending it on roads. But now county surveyors will have more scope to protect their pet road schemes at the expense of the village bus.

A further threat comes from the Transport Bill, which proposes changes in bus licensing. These changes will increase the competition from private operators for the National Bus Company, which runs the majority of buses in rural areas. One consequence of NBC's protected position is that it cross-subsidises its rural routes from its profitable routes. In the face of increased competition, which would clearly have the most effect on NBC's profitable routes, a reduction in cross-subsidy is inevitable. With reduced bus subsidies widespread rural bus withdrawals look inevitable.

And just to rub salt into the wound Fowler has rejected the proposal of the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries to write off the NBC's capital debt – currently costing £13 million a year in interest. So fares will certainly rise.

Not that the independent operators are going to get off lightly. Many independent – and some NBC – services are effectively cross-subsidised by school contract work. The DES is proposing to remove the obligation on local authorities to provide free school transport. This proposal will close still further related rural public bus services.

Less money, but more power for the Vatican

Tana de Zulueta writes from Rome: The secretive meeting of the Roman Catholic church's 129 cardinals which opened here on Monday has been discussing the thorny question of the Vatican's troubled finances: it is common knowledge in the corridors of St Peter's that not even the Vatican has remained immune to inflation and rising costs (having recently organised themselves into a union, the Vatican employees are demanding substantial pay rises). Not surprisingly the Vatican is no longer able

to heat, light, clean and keep up its premises as well as pay a permanent staff of 3,000 with the revenue supplied by museum tickets and Vatican stamps – or even with 'Peter's Pence', a world-wide collection for the Pope which has increased remarkably with the popularity of John Paul II. The cardinals were doubtless treated to a long list of the Vatican's financial woes, but the problem is primarily a question of book-keeping. The church revenues invested by the 'Institute for Religious Works', the Vatican bank, are kept separate. The international operations, and the profits of the bank (which has private lay clients as well) are a well-kept state secret.

There has been no such meeting of all the princes of the church since before the Council of Trent. All the cardinals were invited, even those over 80 who were excluded from the elections of the last two Popes. The event was a genuine revival, not to say restoration. The two previous Popes, by calling first the Council of Vatican II, then successive synods of bishops, were opening the church to more 'collegial' forms of government but John Paul II is vigorously reinforcing pontifical rule. Cardinals are all direct papal nominees, unlike the bishops, whose names are suggested by the local congregations of bishops and only ratified by the Pope. In the days when the Pope ruled his states as king, his cardinals were not necessarily bishops, and sometimes not even priests. They were his princes and delegates. If the assembly this week establishes new powers for itself, a more 'collegial' form of government may come to mean a church run by the Pope and his satraps round the world, the College of Cardinals.

SDLP looks ahead

Bernard Crick writes: The most extraordinary thing about Northern Ireland's Social Democratic Labour Party, which held its ninth annual conference last weekend, is that it is still there. Considering the past sectarian frenzies of anti-unionist politics in Northern Ireland, for a party pledged to the unity of Ireland to hold so many votes and members over ten years is nearly miraculous.

The SDLP is no longer a single issue party: the first day's proceedings waded through social motions, protesting at the cuts – in the social services, even the BBC's external services and the gas supply. As clear as they are that they want the unity of Ireland in the long run, the SDLP genuinely, not just tactically, accept the existence of British power in Northern Ireland. If you argue the abstract points with them they come down to the concrete reality of knowing that their neighbours, the two-thirds majority, can only be persuaded, never coerced. Their hatred of violence is intense – having experienced it themselves from both directions.

Acceptance of the British presence has its limits. Government proposals to return major powers to the local authorities were firmly rejected 'in the absence of an acceptable form of devolved government'. Had 'acceptable' any significance, I asked, rather than the old formula of 'agreed'? No. But subconsciously the SDLP may be shifting its position. John Hume, Member of the European Parliament (and proudly so), moved the endorsement of their main policy statement, *Towards a New Ireland*. This had hardly a word to say about power-sharing in a devolved government, but rather stressed the need for outside intervention, for London and Dublin to work together (with verbal hints of America too), and condemned the unconditional guarantee to the majority of unity with the United Kingdom: 'There are no longer unconditional guarantees for anybody', said Hume. But no one asked what would happen if the Tories withdrew the unconditional guarantee about power-sharing, and simply called elections for the Assembly which is not abolished, just prorogued.

The liveliest debate was on a composite resolution from Mid-Ulster which included a demand for the withdrawal of troops to barracks and for negotiations with 'all political and paramilitary organisations who belong to the Irish tradition'. By a show of hands only about a quarter of the delegates supported this. Their leaders argued that private contacts are one thing, with the UDA as well as the IRA, but that it was immoral for the largest political party in Northern Ireland to legitimise the gunmen.

Traditional shenanigans only burst forth over a motion condemning the handling of the Fermanagh and South Tyrone election, which the local SDLP branch had narrowly voted to fight, to try to oust the prince of perpetual abstainers, the publican Frank Maguire, MP, Independent Republican. The Executive decided not to fight for fear of splitting the anti-Unionist vote. Austin Currie resigned as chief whip, left the executive and fought a brave but futile campaign. Conference backed the EC but gave Currie a huge personal ovation. Gerry Fitt, MP, their one MP, therefore their leader, rashly intervened to attack the executive, and got the reward of a suspension of standing orders to allow a vote to be taken asking for a scheme for the *election* of leader to be put before the next conference. SDLP activists have long despaired that, having built a real mass party, their leader goes on acting like an old style Irish independent.

The only issue widely reported in the press was the demand to negotiate with the IRA, some hardly noting that it was decisively rejected. The *Observer* did not report it all. The SDLP must have annoyed Conor Cruise O'Brien somehow; but they'll survive.

Press freedom threatened in India

K. R. Sundar Rajan writes from New Delhi: The prospects for press freedom in India are not bright. Prime Minister Charan Singh, leader of those who defected from the Janata Party and brought about the fall of Mr Moraji Desai's administration, recently described the press as his No. 1 enemy. Some of his close followers have asked the people to make a bonfire of newspapers critical of the ruling Lok Dal, the new name adopted by Janata defectors, and to stop buying or reading them. Individual journalists in some states have also received threats. If Mr Charan Singh is to be believed, 'the press in India is the mouthpiece of capitalists and multinational Big Business'. One Lok Dal politician in the state of Haryana said that if his party was returned to power in the January general election, 'we will have to take stern measures to ensure that journalists display a measure of commitment to the public good'. Organisations of editors, working journalists and publishers have protested against the growing attacks on the press and called for constitutional guarantees to ensure press freedom, but some

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top leaders of the Janata Party including Mr Desai and Mr Jagjivan Ram have also been critical of the press, though not to the same extent as the ruling Lok Dal. Mr Desai thinks that his fall was engineered by journalists who magnified the squabbles in the undivided Janata Party. Ironically, all these politicians claimed credit for liberating the press from censorship and other shackles which were a feature of Mrs Indira Gandhi's rule.

Both Mr Singh and Mrs Gandhi speak the same language so far as the press is concerned. Mrs Gandhi recently said in public that if her party came to power, it would revive Samachar, the monopolistic news agency she formed during the emergency by forcibly amalgamating all four national news agencies. She has also been vociferously complaining that journalists are blacking her out, though a study of 30 large newspapers has shown that her speeches are getting extensive coverage. In fact, Prime Minister Singh said a few days back that 'newspapers are busy building up Mrs Gandhi as the future prime minister'.

The truth is that for the first time since India became free, the country's newspapers are by and large taking an independent line in the matter of election coverage and comments. While they do not hide their hostility towards Mrs Gandhi because of past experience, the newspapers are also very critical of the political opportunism of Prime Minister Charan Singh's Lok Dal and of the flirtations between some Janata politicians and the Congress faction led by Mrs Gandhi. Healthy differences are also noticeable within newspaper chains. For instance, in the huge newspaper and magazine group owned by Bennett, Coleman & Co., Mrs Gandhi has lost the support of all but one daily. Outside Delhi, well-established and highly respected newspapers like the *Tribune* of Chandigarh and the *Hindu* of Madras have been cautioning the voters against the dangers inherent in Mrs Gandhi's return to power, while simultaneously exposing the unethical doings of politicians belonging to other parties.

Two things seem to be reasonably clear. First, whichever party or coalition of parties come to power in January, the squeeze on the press will begin. If Mrs Gandhi comes out on top, her notorious talent for vindictiveness will be felt by editors and journalists almost immediately. If Mr Charan Singh and his men win the poll, the punishment may be even less sophisticated since many Lok Dal politicians, particularly in the states, are no better than professional hoodlums. If the Janata Party led by Mr Jagjivan Ram gets a majority of the seats, the press may get an uncertain reprieve.

Second, this time the press may choose to give a bitter fight to the politicians, unlike in 1975 when Mrs Gandhi could suppress and seduce editors and senior journalists with amazing ease. As one prominent editor put it, 'Some lessons have been learnt in the last three or four years and those who come to power in January will find it more difficult to control the press. I can confidently predict that this time any surrender will take only after an honourable struggle.'

Korean army finds itself not guilty

Donald Kirk writes from Seoul: The most popular whodunit in South Korea this week is a 20-page narrative, issued by the Martial Law Command, that purports to answer the questions of precisely how, why, when, where and by whom President Park Chung Hee, his security chief and four bodyguards were shot to death on the night of 26 October. The more the Command tries to explain, however, the less it succeeds.

The overwhelming question that the report fails to answer is: where on earth are the bodies? That of Park, to be sure, was interred last Saturday amid pomp and circumstance that was marvellous to behold. But the government has failed to produce a single photograph of his body, and so far no one has the faintest idea what's become of the other bodies.

To Koreans to whom I spoke, the military report appeared too facile for credibility, especially in view of the Martial Law Command's failure to provide any means of independent verifiiation. How can the Command expect anyone in this plot-minded society to accept at face value the stern claim of the Martial Law Commander, General Chung Seung Hwa, that 'No outside power or other government organisation, including the armed forces' was involved?

It might seem far-fetched to suspect that the US Central Intelligence Agency had decided that Park had been around too long for the good of President Carter's 'human rights' policy, as some Koreans keep telling me, but it is difficult to let the armed forces off so easily. There was Chung, of all people, within earshot of the shooting. Could Kim Jae Kyu have persuaded him to flee the 'attack' on the KCIA building where the killings occurred without tarrying to see what was happening?

It is all too pat, especially as a whitewash of the armed forces. Nor does the military tribunal seem likely to offer much further insight since the command's '33 witnesses', as yet unseen or unnamed, doubtless know what to say – for their own well-being if nothing else.

PRISONS
Anna Coote

The May Report fails to tackle the most serious problems of the prison system

No alternative to crisis

NOTABLY ABSENT from last week's report by the May Committee* was any new proposal for dealing with allegations that prison staff have maltreated inmates. Earlier in the week, the Howard League for Penal Reform released yet more alarming evidence of injuries inflicted on prisoners at Wormwood Scrubs by a specially equipped riot squad on 31 August (see caption, opposite). The Howard League added its voice to the call for a public inquiry, which has already come from PROP (the Prisoners' Rights Movement) and the National Council for Civil Liberties. However, on the day the May Report was published, Leon Brittan, Minister of State at the Home Office, told a meeting in London that he did not believe a public inquiry was the best way of tackling the issue: the Home Office, he said, was always receiving allegations of one sort or another, so it would be impracticable to keep setting up public inquiries. He expressed his confidence in the internal inquiry which had been ordered by the Home Office, and which was already under way.

As the NEW STATESMAN has reported (12 October), the squad which invaded D Wing at Wormwood Scrubs included prison officers who had been drafted in from Wandsworth, Pentonville and Brixton prisons. We have since learnt that the Wandsworth officers were sent congratulations for their part in the operation from Governor Honey of the Scrubs and from the Director of the South East Region of the Prison Service, Mr Keith Gibson. The man in charge of the Home Office inquiry is the same Mr Keith Gibson. It is thus hard to imagine how the inquiry will result in a fair assessment of the facts. Its terms of reference are not known to the Board of Visitors, but it is apparent that no one can choose to give evidence: selected individuals are being called upon to speak and the rest will have to keep their version of events to themselves.

It also came to light last week that what happened at the Scrubs was not an isolated outrage. Parliamentary questions from Robert Kilroy-Silk forced the Home Secretary to admit that special 'MUFTI' squads (the title stands, in true Orwellian style, for 'Minimal Use of Force Tactical Intervention') had been deployed on six other occasions between 5 October 1978 and 26 September 1979. It is not yet known how much damage, if any, was caused to prisoners during those operations. But the parent of one young man at Camp Hill prison, Isle of Wight, gave us this account of what happened on 20 September when a 'MUFTI' squad broke up a demonstration by 46 prisoners:

> The Governor had taken all the prisoners' photos out of their cells. So they held a peaceful sit-in to protest about it. During the sit-in the Governor came round with the riot squad. He told them they had 15 minutes to talk it over and come to an agreement. But after about three minutes, the riot squad charged at the prisoners. There were between 150 and 200 of them and they had batons and shields. The prisoners scattered and they were chased back to their cells. Then the squad started knocking them about a bit. My boy was hit on the head but he wasn't seriously injured. One prisoner got a broken nose and one – a coloured chap – got a broken toe. Both of them were moved to other prisons straight afterwards. The governor had told the men there'd be no comeback if they went back to their cells peacefully. But they didn't get a chance to do that and they all lost 30 days' remission.

The description may not be accurate in every detail. But like the first reports that filtered through from Wormwood Scrubs, it is a piece of a jigsaw which may, if the puzzle can ever be completed, add up to a picture of unnecessary violence, perpetrated in secret against defenceless individuals. What is most worrying is that operations of this kind are clearly becoming a normal feature of prison life. It is only a matter of degree whether they end with a broken nose and toe, or with more than 50 inmates needing stitches to head wounds. The public would have remained entirely in the dark, had it not been for the persistence of Mr Kilroy-Silk. If Mr Gibson's inquiry exonerates the 'MUFTI' operation at the Scrubs and his findings remain unchallenged, it is all the more likely that violence will escalate and lives will eventually be lost.

THE MAY REPORT makes no mention of the 'MUFTI' squads – which means either that the inquiry team was not told about them, or that it was instructed to keep them secret. As for devising new checks on the abuse of power by prison staff, the Report goes no further

*Committee of Inquiry into the UK Prison Services Report, HMSO £6.

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than to suggest that a new Prison Inspectorate be set up, 'distanced as far as may be practicable from the Prison Department', yet still 'within the Home Office'. There is no evidence that one branch of the Home Office can be relied upon to investigate another in a manner which will serve the public interest. (Witness the continuing failure of the Commission for Racial Equality to investigate alleged racism in Home Office immigration procedures.) May also considers 'that the management of penal establishments must be consistently characterised by an openness of approach and mind'. But apart from suggesting that this might include 'dismantling . . . some aspects of censorship', it fails to specify what form the new openness should take. There is no question, for example, of any kind of independent ombudsman being set up to hear prisoners' complaints.

The Report finds no reason for altering the powers of Boards of Visitors, except to extend their statutory concern for inmates to 'the welfare of prison staff and their families'. Prisoners who have a grievance are thus left with the same means of redress which have proved so inadequate in the past. They can appeal to the Home Secretary, but that would do no good at all if they were calling into question the actions of prison staff. They can make a complaint to the Board of Visitors. But as one member of the Wormwood Scrubs Board commented this week: 'I am not sure that it would achieve very much. Most prisoners view the Board of Visitors as being on the side of the establishment.' In the two weeks that followed 31 August, the Scrubs' Board of Visitors handed out punishment to large numbers of D Wing inmates – mostly for 'assaulting an unknown officer'. When one Board member was asked it there had been evidence of any injury to the 'unknown officer' in question, the reply was no, there had only been evidence of injury to the *inmate*; but the word of three officers had been weighed against the word of one prisoner and that had been sufficient to justify a guilty verdict. The Chairman of Wormwood Scrubs' Board of Visitors, Mrs Hilary Burgis, MBE, JP, was telephoned by a senior official at the prison late in the evening of Friday 31 August, and asked to visit D Wing as soon as possible. She did not get there until the Sunday and then apparently found nothing seriously amiss. The Board of Visitors has power 'to report to the Home Secretary any matter it thinks expedient to report' and could have made a considerable fuss if it had felt moved to do so. But in this case it did not. Members of the Board are appointed by the Home Secretary.

A prisoner who fails to redress a grievance via the Board of Visitors can try to make contact with a solicitor and take action in the civil courts. Several D Wing inmates are trying to do this now, but their requests for legal aid have just been turned down. A letter to one of them explains that the Law Society's Legal Aid Committee:

> were of the opinion that you have failed to establish any case in law. They consider that you were the author of your own misfortune and that, in any event, the cost of the proceedings would be out of proportion to any possible benefit to you.

Their solicitor, Alistair Logan, will be appealing against the decision, but even if the prisoners succeed in getting legal aid, delays in the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court are such that they are likely to have to wait for two or three years before their cases are heard. Their only remaining hope is that the police will investigate, as they did at Hull (which seems unlikely, since Scotland Yard has referred the matter back to the Prison Department); or that there will be sufficient public outcry to force and independent public inquiry which will carry some clout with the Government.

The latter ought not to have been impossible. For there are quite a number of individuals who are closely connected with the Scrubs who are well aware of what happened on 31 August, and who are horrified by it. Strong statements from two or three of the prisoners promptly after the event, might have forced the Government's hand. But what has emerged from conversations with them over the past weeks is a remarkably consistent pattern of connivance – by default – with the authorities' desire to keep everything under wraps. Each one of them has a compelling reason why he or she should not spill the beans. A senior official is worried about his career: if he spoke out he would probably lose his job and might have to leave the prison service altogether; would he not do more good (he reasons with himself) if he kept quiet and stayed on the inside, where he could exert a more liberal influence in the future? A probation officer fears that lodging a formal protest would antagonise the Prison Officers' Association at the Scrubs and so jeopardise the future of probation work on D Wing. Members of the Board of Visitors are worried that they would be unable to continue their work on the Board if they stuck their necks out . . . and so on. One wonders what the prisoners themselves would prefer – the continued attention of probation officers and the like, or the right to freedom from assault?

So far only one individual, an official visitor to the Scrubs called Jonathan Pollitzer, has allowed himself to be identified, by describing on Thames Television the seven stitches he saw in a prisoner's head, and the ban on official visits to D Wing cells which has been in force ever since the attack. He has been criticised by others at the Scrubs for behaving in an 'excitable' fashion and not 'giving a chance' to the internal inquiry (which suggests that his sense of outrage is on the way to being dismissed as freakish). I heard another official visitor *begging* Mr Pollitzer not to appear on television again, lest he should prompt the POA to continue its ban on visits to D Wing. These, presumably, are the means by which secrecy is normally preserved in Her Majesty's prisons – to the perpetual satisfaction of the Home Office – while less 'excitable' men than Mr Pollitzer can be persuaded not to step out of line.

Peter Kennard

'Mr X tells me that he was at the back of the hall, so was not injured, but as he was led out of the hall, he had to climb over about eight or nine men lying unconscious in pools of blood. The prison hospital ran out of stitching material as there were so many injured prisoners.'

Letter from a probation officer to the Howard League, 8 October 1979, describing a client's observations on the events of 31 August.

THE POA HAS EVIDENTLY played a key role, both in the events which led up to the 'MUFTI' operation at the Scrubs and in the cover-up which followed. This points to another conspicuous gap in the May Report: it includes no account of how much power the POA wields, nor any suggestion as to how it might be curbed. It is now clear that the attack on D Wing took place without the Wing Governors knowing anything about it. In the hours immediately preceding it, they were busy talking to the prisoners, trying to defuse the tension and sending telephone messages to Governor Honey, via the control tower, which asked him to come down and talk to the men. Governor Honey, meanwhile, was waiting for the 'MUFTI' squads which were arriving from other prisons to join up with officers

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from the Scrubs and assemble in the yard outside D Wing. It has been suggested that the Governor was under pressure from the POA not to be 'soft' on the prisoners by acceding to the requests of the Wing Governors (who are not POA members and who tend to be recruited from outside its ranks). The latest report by PROP*, out next week, includes this account by a regular visitor to the Scrubs of a conversation he had last month with one of the prison officers:

> 'We are winning' he told me.
> 'Winning against whom?' I asked
> 'Against the inmates, of course. And the Wing Governors.'

is not only at Wormwood Scrubs that the OA exerts an uncomfortable influence. At a ison in the West Country, a member of the ard of Visitors recently found that he had urred the disapproval of the prison officers the informal style in which he conducted h visits and by his tendency to encourage inates to chat to him. The POA is now rsing to accompany him to the cells, and th prison governor has chosen to stop his vis altogether, rather than risk antagonising th officers any further. The main task of the Mnquiry was to investigate the 'deteriorat-ing dustrial relations' between the POA and the ome Office which had been disrupting the ison service for many months. But there is nmuch in the Report to put the POA in a swee mood. It refuses to link prison offic-ers' p with that of the police (a long-standing dem of the POA) and it describes some mem rs as 'overtime bandits'. It notes that the gr ing numbers of specialists working in prison such as welfare workers, teachers and psychologists) have restricted the scope of prison ficers' own employment, and sug-gests th officers should be involved more closely th education and welfare work. But it rejects proposals from prison officers that there should be fewer civilians (non-POA members) employed in the prison service, and that prison officers should take over the work of probation officers and social workers. Instead, it insists there should be *more* civilians employed in prisons. While the May team was probably right to draw these conclu-sions, the Report will not improve industrial relations – and prisoners will continue to bear the brunt of the POA's dissatisfaction.

The fact that officers feel they are being relegated to a menial 'turnkey' role poses a genuine problem. Not all of them would be suited to auxiliary welfare or educational work, even if it were available. So how can their status and job satisfaction be enhanced? Perhaps this is where the 'MUFTI' squads come in, and the growing preoccupation with security and control in the prison service. A screw can be more than just a turnkey: he can be a security officer, trained in the use of appropriate technological aids; he can be a specialist in riot control, ready to be called out on special assignments, complete with helmet, shield, visor and baton. The danger is, of course, that the character of the prison service will be formed by the needs of its employees.

ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM of over-crowding – which has done more than any-thing to bring prisons to the point of collapse – the May Report talks about the need to reduce the prison population and to develop more alternatives to custody. In his speech last week Leon Brittan took up the same theme. 'We must make further progress,' he said, towards ensuring that custodial sentences are 'confined to those whose isolation from soci-ety is clearly necessary'. He admitted that the weight of research suggested that ' "treat-ment", in whatever form it is administered to offenders has no beneficial effect in terms of reducing reconviction rates'. He too favoured more alternatives to custody, but cited the rather crude example of 'some simple form of overnight accommodation where drunks could sleep off the most anti-social effects of their drunkenness'. He and May both missed the point that when alternatives have been developed in the past, they have tended to serve as an additional form of punishment, rather than as a substitute for custody. For example, suspended sentences are often used in cases where the offender would not have been sent to jail before they were invented. The same may turn out to be true of commun-ity service orders, attendance centres and other new methods of punishment. It is worth repeating the much-quoted example of the Dutch prison system: Holland has a remark-ably low rate of imprisonment (20 per 100,000 inhabitants compared with 75 for England and Wales). Its crime rate is compar-able with the UK's and it has fewer police (176 per 100,000, compared with 222 in the UK). Yet the Dutch have not developed a range of 'alternatives' to custody. They have a different system of prosecution which allows cases to be dropped if it is not considered in the public interest to pursue them. And sen-tences are far, far shorter. In 1975, 75.5 per cent of prison sentences in Holland were for less than three months and only 4.2 per cent were for one year or more, compared with 39.5 per cent and 28.4 per cent respectively in England and Wales. If the British government were prepared to act upon the example of the Dutch system, our prison population could be reduced by more than half. It would not then be necessary to spend £50m a year on a new prison building system, as the May Report recommends. Again, past experience has shown that when prisons have been expanded to reduce overcrowding and give inmates one cell each, they have simply been filled with more and more prisoners until there are two or three in every cell again. So it looks as though the prison population will continue to increase, conditions will decline, tensions will grow. At least there will not be many redun-dancies among prison officers.

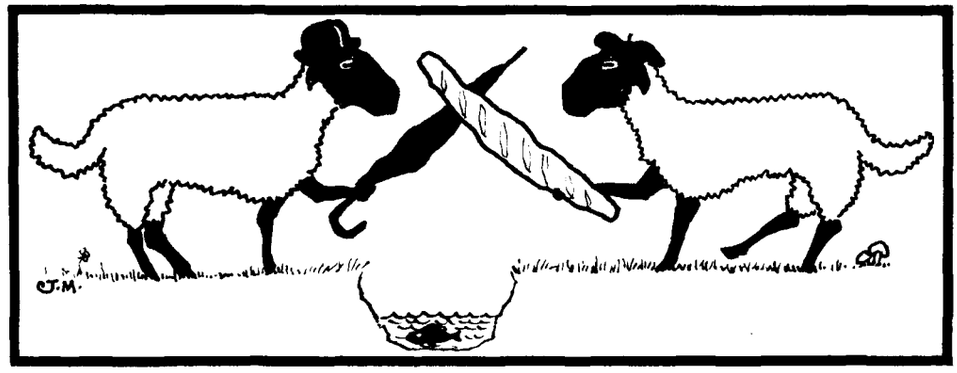
Special Report on Wormwood Scrubs, 40p from PROP, 21 Atwood Rd, London W6.

FAMING
Barr Wilson

Peter Walker's lamb war is about protecting the British farmer

The campaign for dearer food

PETER WLKER, who has hardly put a foot right since king over as Minister of Agricul-ture, has clrly decided that the best way to do his job i to copy Labour's Mr John Silkin (the Beast oBrussels, a tag he gloried in) and wave the bi stick at the Common Market. However, Skin went in to bat for British interests he eemed worthy of preservation (like the mi boards), while Mr Walker's vigorous conemnation of the French ban on imported lam (which was ruled to be illegal by the European Court in September) amounts to a endorsement of even more legalistic EEC silliness and a crusade for dearer lamb i Britain. Interestingly, Silkin condemned thurge to create a uniform mar-keting regime r sheep meat throughout the EEC as typial Community nonsense: uniformity whethere was no justification for it. The only peoe who want a free Commun-ity trade in lamlare British lamb producers, who have experinced the biggest boom since the war while Brain has been in the EEC.



The opportuty for this boom arose because lamb is completely different com-modity in France han it is in Britain, where a plentiful supply o cheap New Zealand lamb has made it one of the cheaper cuts of meat. Until recently lamb was always about half the price in Britain that it was in France, where production is geared to higher prices and better quality, with a large amount of money and research going into breeding for out-of-season production (unnecessary in Britain where New Zealand lamb fills the seasonal gap).

So France has, on the one hand, high-cost capital-intensive producers and, on the other, in the hills, small breeders providing the basic stocks. Many of France's 160,000 sheep far-mers would be ruined by free access for cheap British produce. The average sized sheep stock in France is about 30 ewes; it's 100 in Britain and about 1000 in New Zealand. The 10 per cent fall in prices this year (probably caused by the British import threat) has already threatened thousands of small French hill farmers. The French Minister of Agricul-ture is determined to protect them.

Until Britain joined the EEC France did permit free Community trade in lamb – none

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on his book about The Shooting of Gary Gilmore

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of the other original six produced the stuff in significant quantities. With the arrival of Britain the French introduced protective measures against British imports: a large import levy makes up the difference in price and the government reserves the right to ban all UK trade when its own prices fall below a trigger level. The exercise of this right has closed the French market for several weeks – the longest closure for years.

British sheep farmers are particularly angry as, at the beginning of last year, the French opened their market, levy free, to the Irish, arguing that British lamb would continue to face discrimination because of our imports of cheap New Zealand lamb, which are greater than total French production. A reluctant Silkin asked the EEC Commission to take the issue to the European Court – he had little choice, as Britain had been taken to the Court over its pig subsidy and potato import ban. (Although Britain lost, neither of these issues was as potentially damaging as the ruling on French lamb.)

WHEN THE IRISH won free access to the French market, the price of lamb in Ireland doubled within a few weeks. With a much bigger industry, the impact would not be as sharp in Britain, but prices would certainly rise by more than the 10 per cent estimated by the Ministry of Agriculture in evidence to the House of Lords two years ago. Indeed prices have already risen: until the slump this summer and autumn the market seemed firmly fixed at boom levels. Four years ago the British price was 50 per cent of the French price; this year it has been as high as 75 per cent. Before joining the EEC Britain exported no lamb; now nearly 15 per cent goes to continental Europe, despite the French restrictions. The upshot has been an unprecedented expansion of British sheepbreeding after decades of decline or stagnation. This too-fast expansion has now collapsed the British market (and undermined the French) and the French are being blamed.

But in fact British exports to France have crumbled in the last two years, as exporters have switched to Holland and Germany, which have free access to the higher priced French market. The French have tried to stop this trade but have found it almost impossible to identify the original source of a lamb carcase. They are not going to abandon their small low income producers, which they have encouraged to expand since the war, for the sake of an outdated economic doctrine called free trade.

The French hope to delay things as Brussels argues over the rules for a sheepmeat policy: the British want free trade; the French want subsidies and safeguards to keep out New Zealand meat when necessary. These demands are clearly irreconcilable and the French will hold out until there are cast iron safeguards for their farmers.

Although this will dent the European ideal once more, many will be relieved. Right now 40 lorry loads of French Golden Delicious apples are arriving in Britain every day and British apple growers are going out of business. There is no shortage of people who would prefer the English Cox's Orange Pippin and the unsurpassed French *gigot* to the doctrinaire EEC any day of the week.

But the French refusal to obey the ruling of the Court is the most serious challenge yet to the Common Agricultural Policy. A French victory would open all agricultural ministers to the cry, from any section of their national farming lobby, 'If the French got away with it, why can't you?' British fishermen, for instance, would like to see a French victory. And, astutely, the EEC's agriculture minister, Mr Finn Olav Gunderlach, this week asked Britain to remove all obstacles to the import of liquid milk. This threatens a major UK national interest and would test Walker's dedication to Community free trade.

OFFICIAL SECRETS

What Tory freedom really means

Towards the police state

Duncan Campbell and Christopher Price write: In the hands of a really oppressive government, the proposed new Protection of Official Information Bill could wholly and effectively destroy press and personal freedom in key areas of policy. The Bill defines a new type of secret information – known in official Newspeak as 'protected' – which may not be discussed at all by unauthorised citizens, irrespective of whether or not it is common knowledge or is publicly available. The Bill does not confine itself to 'disclosure' in conversation or by publication. It gives officials powers to tour the country if they wish, demanding on pain of three months imprisonment that books, documents and any other articles containing such 'protected' information be surrendered. Librarians, academics, journalists and any others interested in three key areas of protected information would not be saved from the law even if all their files held was a set of newspaper clippings. Even if unused in this way, the new law would intimidate journalists, authors and editors from free expression.

The powers contained in the new Bill go far beyond proposals made in recent reviews of the Official Secrets Act. In the protected areas of information, the government's powers would be far greater than they now possess under the old and discredited Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act. In particular, matters of defence and foreign affairs, security and intelligence, telephone tapping and mail opening would be entirely removed from public discussion. Published books and articles dealing critically with these subjects could also effectively be banned, and dispensed to the memory hole.

The Bill is now about to enter the Committee stage in the House of Lords, after receiving a second reading on Monday. Comments in the Lords were severely critical, and few peers or politicians really believe that the government is ignorant of the repressive effect of the proposed new law. The Bill does, of course, abolish the possibility of prosecution for revealing information in areas like health and social security, employment and the environment. But Section 2 was never actually used in these areas anyway, and the new Bill offers no positive encouragement to more official disclosure.

Several strange and sinister aspects of the Bill were raised in the Lords. There are six protected areas defined in the Bill; in addition to the three above, these are, generally, law and order, confidential information from other governments, and confidential information from or about individuals, companies or nationalised industries. In the latter three areas, anyone accused can offer the defence that the information concerned had previously been 'made available' to the public. This defence, according to Home Office minister Lord Belstead is not restricted to information *officially* made available. But this defence is withdrawn from anything to do with telephone tapping, or the other three areas. This, spokesmen have previously made clear, is intended to criminalise those who gather information together from public sources.

The debate in the Lords on Monday focused strongly on two issues; classification and certification. The Franks Committee which reviewed Section 2 had proposed the classification system as the lynchpin of the new law; only if a document and its information had previously been classified secret was its disclosure an offence. The government have abandoned this idea and left a dangerous mess instead. Ministers can certify that any information they care to name in the area of defence or international relations would, if disclosed, cause serious injury to the nation. They can even do this after the event, in order to ensure a conviction in court proceedings. This untrammelled right of certification promises many ludicrous scenes in court, as Lord Hutchinson revealed. A minister might certify that a particular revelation about defence would cause serious damage, and the defendant couldn't dispute this. But he could still point out that the information was already completely public and hadn't in fact caused serious damage, so that he could genuinely believe that the revelation wouldn't be seriously damaging, although the minister certified that it was. Such nonsense is characteristic of the Bill's new Newspeak.

The 'unfettered discretion' offered to ministers was also attacked by Lord Goodman, who has proposed that the government take the advice of the Chairman of the Press Council, Patrick Neill, and further amend the Bill in consultation with a few establishment figures.

Classification procedure, which the Franks Committee urged should be carefully and critically set up, has been left wholly vague. All powers of classification are vested centrally with the Cabinet Office and not under the control of individual ministers, in itself a secretive and undemocratic procedure intended to remove classification issues from parliamentary scrutiny. Instead of prescribing precise classification rules the current Bill alludes to the powers of any designated 'responsible authority' – junior clerks not excluded – and more exact regulations to be laid before parliament at a later date.

One thing is certain. When the Bill reaches the Commons around Christmas, many MPs are unlikely to lightly accept its restraints without some *quid pro quo*. That would be corresponding measures for Freedom of Information – and the removal of the outrageous powers now latent in the Bill.

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HELP reform obsolete 1876 law governing experimentation on living animals

5,195,409 experiments on living animals are known to have taken place last year – many more were not even recorded as they were not covered by the law.

No-one knows how many animals are used in experiments.

New legislation is necessary to ensure:

1 Greater scrutiny and public accountability

2 Proper controls over pain and distress

3 Restriction of purposes for which experiments are allowed

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Ask your MP to attend the House of Commons on 16 November to listen to Peter Fry's Bill to reform the 103 year old law.

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Please mark your envelope 'EXPERIMENTATION'

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A man called Intrepid

While doing little else, the most recent Royal Commission on the Press performed one useful function by demonstrating the journalistic narrowness of our supposedly diverse national press. According to the Commission, it employs only some 3,000 journalists, and only 40 per cent of them are engaged – on a broad definition – in writing and information-gathering. The rest spend their time in oiling the surprisingly extensive bureaucracy, and in dressing-up material for publication – which is the side of business that Fleet Street always finds most fascinating.

Given the episodic nature of television's current-affairs work, and the leaden conformity of much provincial and specialist journalism, it's not much of an apparatus for investigating and analysing the affairs of a nation of fifty million. And indeed it is the sheer absence of *reporting* – of information – which strikes foreigners who visit Britain. Fleet Street's structure is that of an inverted pyramid, in which a great volume of commentating and opinion-mongering overshadows a shrinking base of active inquiry. Today is the Age of the Pundit, and there is a high value placed upon the ability to pass hectic judgment upon situations without going to the trouble and expense of looking into them. To many consumers, and to a good few of the professionals themselves, it now appears that such is the central business of journalism: Philip Toynbee in last week's *Observer* identified Bernard Levin, the busiest operator in this line of work, as 'the most remarkable journalist of our time'. Without going outside Britain, that same time has included (for instance) Nicholas Tomalin, Paul Foot, Anthony Sampson, Richard Ingrams, Harold Evans, Charles Raw, John Pilger and Conor Cruise O'Brien, all of whom (whatever one thinks of them) have stuck to the idea that the getting and giving of information has something to do with journalism – as against Toynbee's idea that Levin is 'the purest type of journalist' because he has 'nothing but himself to put across'. With *The Times* about to return, mounting – including Levin – the nation's most elaborate battery of pundits, it seems worth examining some representative specimens, and the role they play in our national life. Where else to begin such a survey except with Bernard Levin, the 'purest type'?

LET THE RECORD show that in October 1979, during the closing weeks of the 'ME decade', Bernard Levin achieved the total state of self-absorption towards which he had been moving for so long. The venue was the Café Royal: amid incense and vaguely Oriental music, flanked by his companion Ms Arianna Stassinopoulos, Levin rose and told a large invited audience how they could be 'changed' by investing £150 in a 50-hour '*Insight* training'. He testified to his own 'astonishing and incalculably valuable revelatory experience': although he was not allowed to recount any detail, the same could be made available to anyone else for £3 an hour. The salesmanlike, reassuring quality of his speech might have disappointed those who remembered the acerbic days of *TW3*, the frisky impertinence of the *Taper* column – or those who liked to imagine *The Times* as purveying the words of a fiercely rigorous social critic, ever alert to the task of scourging pretension.

The new Levin – or was it just the old Levin, a little older? – was slick and smug. He insisted that no one undergoing 'training' would have to 'do anything if they don't want to' (what would the founders of religion have made of that emollient guarantee?), and that *Insight* 'operates entirely within the self' (the link between the publicist and the creed could hardly be plainer).

Other testimonies were proffered, some in print. 'Happiness has no limit – my greatest friend is me', or 'it was a joy . . . to serve you and be served by your willingness to participate in your own unfoldment'. The effect was of a Woody Allen pastiche played dead straight, or an episode in the collapse of Kenneth Widmerpool. Key words were 'support', 'joy', 'beautiful' and 'Spirit'. No pain, no sacrifice, no effort. Just £150. The witnesses were anxious to explain, though, that their attitude to the external world remained unchanged: the *self* was all. '*Insight*,' said one, 'led me to an easier suspension of disbelief.'

The movement's literature has the formlessness of ectoplasm, making a core quotation hard to identify. Stassinopoulos, perhaps, comes closest with the remark that (after treatment) 'I was at last living from my being rather than my head.' Playing Yoko Ono to Levin's lacklustre John Lennon, she speaks for him in terms outdistancing satire:

> Like all the really important revelations, *Insight* is a paradox: I knew at one and the same time that the most important relationship I will ever have is the relationship with myself and yet that my greatest strength and freedom is my conscious awareness of my oneness with everyone else.

No chance of the head having been involved there. The question is: what is Levin doing in this galère? Why the disgust for cerebration, the gleeful leap into credulity? Has he not, over the years, traded on a reputation for acidity, and independence of mind? When did the termites get to him, and by what route?

One explanation is that they were there all along. Levin's conversion to unilateral moral re-armament may strike his admirers as a turn-up. But the collection of his journalism into book form – *Taking Sides*[1] – makes it clear that in this case, as in others, chance does nothing which is not prepared beforehand. The more examination is given to Levin's claim to have been a 'gadfly', a 'maverick', a lone voice against injustice, the more it recedes, showing his career to have been a journey towards conformity. And what can make the final acceptance entirely cosy except 'suspension of disbelief'?

Levin's own self-image is clear and winsome. 'I am afraid,' he says, 'that I have a great deal to say.' He speaks of his 'need for a position in which I can be *Athanasius contra mundum*', and of being happiest as a writer when going 'against the grain'. The essays contained in *Taking Sides*, together with a few more which are in the pipeline 'comprise all the journalism that I wish to preserve', so they provide a fair means of measuring-up the man alongside the claims. In his introduction he describes himself as 'a man at ease with the art of the 18th century but distrustful of the basis of the Enlightenment's optimism; above all one who, day by day, finds himself more and more convinced of the importance of the inexplicable'. After this spacious, if rather loopy definition, what of the brave stand *contra mundum*?

There is a no-holds-barred attack on a teacher sacked for sexual relations with a sixteen-year-old; a teacher, moreover, whose appeal had already been dismissed. There is an assault upon Dr Bridget Rose Dugdale for some remarks she is reported to have made after giving birth while imprisoned for terrorist offences. There are two descriptions of clashes with the bureaucracy, one involving the North Thames Gas Board and one involving the television licence fee: castigations of minor officialdom are often salutary, but do they cut against *The Times*'s grain?

There are a number of tough-talking political articles: Levin does not shirk isolation and danger. He castigates the governments of East Germany, South Africa and (in 1977) Cambodia, thus braving the wrath of their hordes of admirers.

The piece on South Africa is a laboured parody of the apartheid style, featuring a 'Mr Cheekykaffir' as the late Steve Biko. The ones on Cambodia are a straight (and acknowledged) lift from the *Reader's Digest*. They do not include the article Levin wrote at around the same time which slandered and misrepresented those who had worried about Cambodia *before* 1977 (when it was a controversial subject which never attracted Levin's attention). Nor, even though he congratulates himself at one point on having 'seen through' Harold Wilson earlier than most, does Levin include any of the articles which show him to have been one of the last to see through Richard Nixon (if indeed he ever did). His defences of John Stonehouse and Jeremy Thorpe are also missing. Neither required Dreyfusard commitment because they reflected the establishment feeling that both these poor fellows were being subjected to media persecution: in both cases, something like the opposite was the truth.

THERE IS NONE of the self-criticism which is expected in a retrospective collection, though the pomposity of the introduction is flatly contradicted at one point in the text. Levin says he has never written on 'Northern Ireland and its troubles on which I have never been able to think of anything to say which

1. Jonathan Cape, £6.50.

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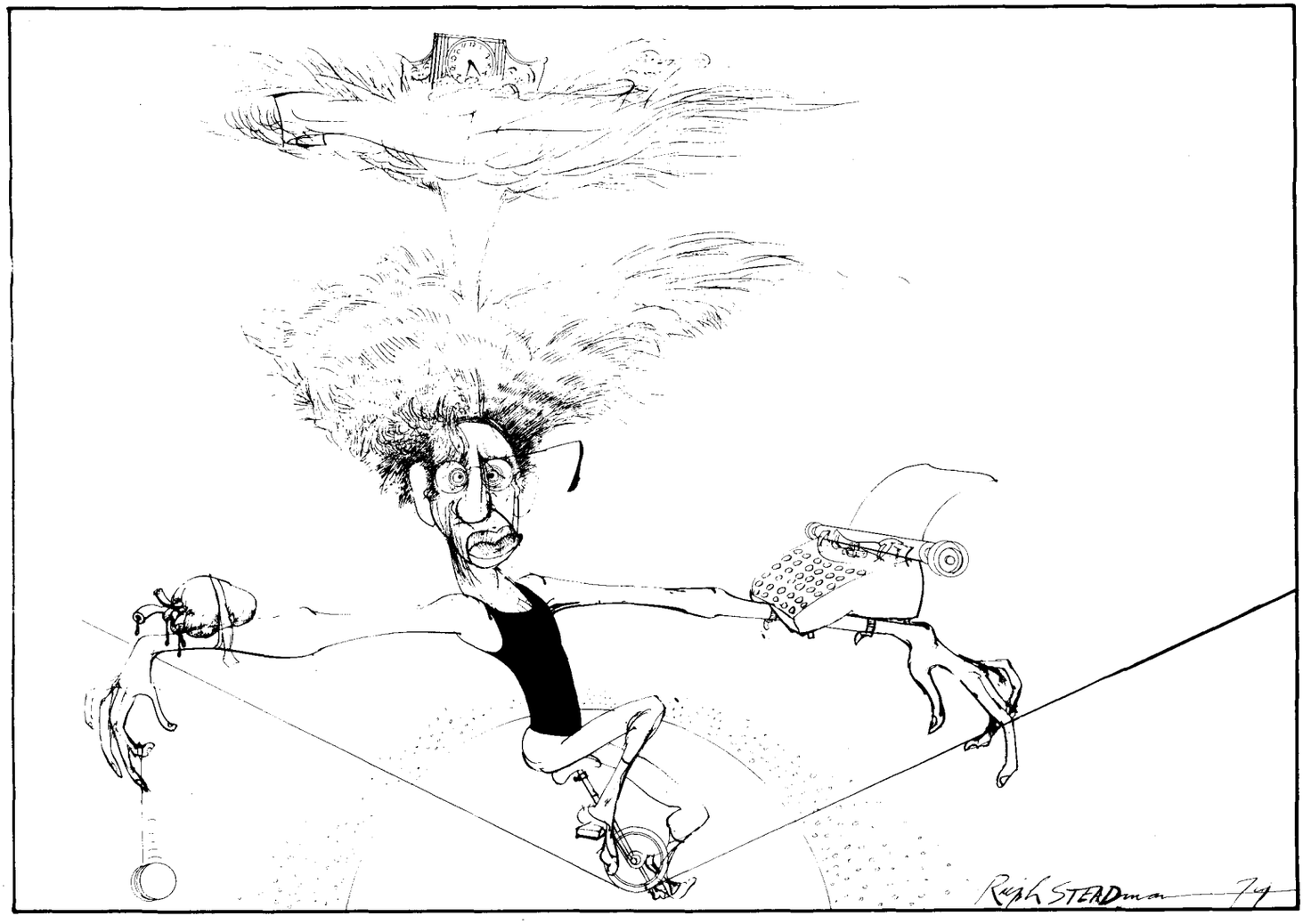

seemed to me worth saying'. Or worth remembering, anyway: on page 180 there is an entire article on the subject, full of an affected knowledge of Irish history, and containing a courageous and outspokenly individual attack on – the Provisional IRA.

Well. If, as Levin says of his crusading journalism, 'the road has been hard, dusty and uphill all the way', perhaps we can forgive his immersion in the cooling stream of *Insight*. In the samizdat world of *The Times*, where every article levies its toll of risk on the lonely author, no doubt perspectives can become warped. The world of TV and radio is hardly less demanding:

> I have lost count of the number of times that some cringing idiot in charge of a television or radio discussion in which I have expressed myself passionately on such matters as liberty and tyranny has deflected the embarrassment he feels by saying, with that special mirthless laugh they have, 'Well, well, Bernard certainly seems to feel strongly on the subject.'

Not much self-doubt there: no room for the reflection that at least one or two of these interlocutors may have been embarrassed by the nonsense Levin was talking. The trouble about him, as a labourer in the vineyard of liberty, is that he seems increasingly unable to strike out on his own. Show him a fish in a barrel, and he will shoot it. Once the Owl of Minerva is airborne, Levin will point out that there is a new spirit abroad or that an era has drawn to an end. But no truly unpopular or dangerous cause has been really his, though victimised and derided individuals on the Left can be sure of an extra boot from him in passing. (Think of the pluck required, in *The Times* or on one of those hazardous chat-shows, to refer to Tariq Ali or Vanessa Redgrave as 'loonies'.)

It is not that his flailing attacks never land upon real or even occasionally formidable targets: it's just that the direction seems fortuitous and the manner wholly undiscriminating. As James Fenton observed in the context of a debate over Cambodia, the central feature of Levin's style is not the political alignment (actually somewhere along the centre-line of British politics) but its eschewal of all taste and style praise from Levin, said Fenton, must be as disconcerting as blame, like 'being hosed down with maple syrup'.

THERE ARE in *Taking Sides* plenty of foretastes of the moonshine and banality which have now engulfed him and Ms Stassinopoulos. On a visit to the 'Festival of Mind and Body' at Olympia, he claims to detect 'the visible signs of an exceptional serenity' on the faces there, though he doesn't report any substantiating conversations. Then, on a (daring) visit to *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* he discovers that 'benign intentions' are at work in the universe:

> The final effect of the film is to send us out with an extraordinarily exalted feeling, of the kind we get before any work of art that expresses – as all true art does and must – the sense of order and harmony, with its irreducible core of mystery, in the universe. In other words, we emerge with the feeling that not only the film, but the universe, has got the answer right.

This swirling bullshit, especially the element in it which regards the universe as a big happy symphony (albeit with its 'core of mystery') could not possibly come from a mind which was *really* concerned with the 'hard, dusty, uphill road', or with the battle for truth and liberty. Now that Levin has erected his *Close Encounters* review into a whole *Insight* view of the world and the mind, his pretended concern for the great issues must be written down as the affectation it always was.

The Sayings of Père Patriarche

"To act on a whim can be entertaining. To buy wine on a whim is unlikely to be so."

PÈRE PATRIARCHE
RED & WHITE VIN DE TABLE
BOTTLED IN FRANCE BY PATRIARCHE
For once, don't worry about the wine.

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Six years ago, in a stern and fearless attack upon Mr Nigel Nicolson for having published his mother's bisexual memoirs, Levin said scornfully of the dead Vita Sackville-West that:

> . . . you can also afford (if you are silly enough to want to) to spend your time striking grotesque poses, keening over your own emotions and saying things like 'I had been vouchsafed insight, as one sometimes is'.

Not even his enemies would have wished upon Levin the fate which has actually overtaken him: as a salesman for *Insight* he has become one of the grotesques in his own synthetic bestiary. Right at the beginning of the 'ME decade' he wrote a book called *The Pendulum Years*, in which he examined the Sixties, offering such challenges as:

> The Sixties faced the future and the past at once . . . forwards or backwards? Up or down? Modernisation or preservation? The future or the past? And which was which anyway?

Title and format evoked Malcolm Muggeridge's rather less flatulent book *The Thirties*. Muggeridge there began his weary trudge towards religion – though the difference is that he has at least connected with the real thing, rather than with the phonies who have ensnared Levin. Reviewing the book in 1940, George Orwell accused Muggeridge of 'enjoying the prospect' of 'abysses which are horrible to contemplate': and Levin's present position, with its fashionable gloom about progress in human society, is remarkably like the Muggeridge position of 40 years ago as Orwell anatomised it:

> We have believed in 'progress', trusted to human leadership, rendered unto Caesar the things that are God's – that approximately is the line of thought. Unfortunately Mr Muggeridge shows no sign of believing in God himself.

And neither do the egomaniacs of *Insight*: even religion, in order to become more marketable, has been stripped of any recognisable values. Like the other fragments of the 'consciousness movement', they demand a religion which always goes in silver slippers, and never marches against wind and tide: one which enables them to bathe luxuriously in self-adoration. The text they draw from Solzhenitsyn 'If you wanted to put the world to rights, who should you begin with? Yourself or others?' sits easily, because it means everything and therefore nothing. In America Christopher Lasch has analysed the phenomenon in *The Culture of Narcissism*:

> When personal relations are conducted with no other object than psychic survival, 'privatism' no longer provides a haven from a heartless world. On the contrary, private life takes on the very qualities of the anarchic social order from which it is supposed to provide a refuge. It is the devastation of personal life, not the retreat into privatism, which needs to be criticised and condemned. The trouble with the consciousness movement is not that it addresses trivial or unreal issues but that it provides self-defeating solutions.

The 'most remarkable journalist of our time' turns out to be a man who, when struck with the religious impulse – the event is not after all uncommon – is simply unable to tell the difference between the real thing and a crack-brained simulacrum. Yet Levin did not begin, twenty-odd years ago, without some resources of intelligence and curiosity. Why the debacle?

The industry offered him reward for developing a salesman's talents, rather than a writer's: swift, shallow enthusiasms, and a high toleration for self-contradiction, together with a massive sense of self-importance. Gullibility is the salesman's professional deformation. But in a salesman it may be no more than chronic, and endurable. In a journalist, once brought about by the demands of punditry, it is acute and terminal.

Christopher Hitchens

Next week: Francis Wheen profiles Ronald Butt, man of many words.

ECONOMICS

The attack on the public sector

The effect of the cuts in public spending announced last week will be to make Britain a tattier, meaner and less hospitable place in which to live. This, the Tories claim, is necessary to give the private sector the room to grow to create the wealth to pay for the public sector. However, as PAUL ORMEROD argues, there is little empirical evidence to suggest that the economy works as the Tories claim.

CURRENT BRITISH ECONOMIC policy is being conducted in an unreal atmosphere in which blind faith triumphs over reason and empirical evidence. Although we cannot assert with absolute certainty that the Tories' economic miracle will not happen and although we cannot be completely certain that a Labour government would have continued with the dismal policies of the last four years, to judge from recent behaviour, both statements are very likely to be true.

Even the ebullient Roy Hattersley seems to find Labour's record on public spending a substantial handicap in exchanges between the front benches on the recent Tory cuts. Although the emphasis on where the cuts should fall does differ, the Thatcher cuts effectively represent a continuation of the policy adopted by the Labour cabinet in 1975/6. Labour would almost certainly be introducing cuts in the present circumstances, if only to pay for public sector wage increases which, after lagging behind those in the private sector during periods of incomes policy, have now been catching up. However, the cuts proposed would not have been as large as those planned by the Tories. Furthermore, between 1975/76 and 1978/79, there was no real growth in public spending even if the mounting interest payments on the national debt are included. But, more importantly, as a share of national output, the claims of the public sector on the nation's resources fell sharply from 27 per cent of GDP at market prices in 1975/6 to some 23½ per cent in 1978/79. This is the biggest fall in Britain's history apart from demobilisation in 1918-20 and 1945-47.

These figures may seem uncommonly low as right-wing arguments always concentrate on total public spending as a percentage of GDP, which is over 40 per cent. But this high figure is obtained by including transfer payments (pensions, social security payments, etc.) which simply represent a redistribution of income between different groups in society. However, these are netted out in the calculation of GDP so that like is being divided by unlike. While transfer payments may have implications for the financing of government spending they do not represent a claim on the nation's physical resources.

The main rationale for public spending cuts under Labour, spelt out in ministerial statements and successive public spending White Papers, was that the cuts would enable the private sector to expand, to fill the gap created by the reduction in public spending. The Tories justify their cuts in similar terms, albeit more flamboyantly. Paragraph 8 of the new public spending White Paper (Cmnd 7746) explicity states:

> Higher public expenditure cannot be any longer allowed to precede, and thus prevent, growth in the private sector.

However, a mere page earlier the Treasury have been able to slip in a more qualified and reasonable statement that high government borrowing displaces *some* private sector spending (paragraph 3). No-one could dispute this: the key question is by how much. Government ministers clearly believe that it displaces as much, and even more, so that it actually prevents growth and reduces output. However, the empirical evidence for such an effect in the UK is very weak. Quite simply, the last four years have seen severe cuts in public spending while the UK economy has had its deepest recession since the thirties. Although this is in part due to the relatively slow rate of growth of world trade, it is clear that the private sector has so far failed to expand sufficiently to fill the gap created by the cuts in public spending. In particular private sector investment has been very low, with the intentions survey indicating an actual fall in real terms in manufacturing investment in 1980.

THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT hopes that the behaviour of the economy in the future will be quite different from its behaviour in the recent past. A massive gamble is being taken that further cuts in public spending will lead to a miraculous expansion of private sector activity which has hitherto been virtually non-existent. These cuts are likely to prove even more damaging than those made by Labour. In the short term, for example, the Tory cuts will have a more immediate impact on the level of economic activity and employment and on the provision of services, due to the fact that a greater proportion of them are falling on current as opposed to capital spending, particularly for local authorities. The cuts under Labour concentrated disproportionately on capital spending between 1975/6 and 1978/9. Of course, in the long run such savings are a false economy, but their immediate effect is less drastic.

Furthermore, the cuts are being made at a time when the financial position of the company sector is distinctly weak. Any reduction in company cash flow brought about either directly through the reduction in public sector contracts or indirectly through the general

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slackening of economic activity will intensify this weakness. And the classic response of companies when faced with a liquidity problem is to cut back sharply on stockbuilding. This happened in the winter of 1974/75, when stocks fell by an amount equal to 5 per cent of GDP between the third quarter of 1974 and the first quarter of 1975. While the financial position of companies is somewhat stronger than it was then, and the level of stocks relative to output does not appear to be so high, the possibility of a sharp stock-induced recession cannot be discounted.

In the longer term, in the absence of any U-turn on policy, the recent abolition of exchange controls may well lead to cuts being made on an even larger scale than is currently being envisaged. One of the reasons why the Government believes cuts to be necessary is that it is deeply committed to achieving very tight targets for the expansion of the money supply. Further, it believes that the movement of the money supply is so closely linked with the public sector borrowing requirement – basically the difference between what the government spends and what it collects in taxes – that it is only by keeping this tightly under control that it can be sure of limiting the growth of money supply. With a commitment to cut taxes, this means cutting spending.

But, in practice, the link between monetary growth and the borrowing requirement is by no means precise and the authorities can attempt to control the money supply by a variety of means – such as an aggressive policy on the sale of gilts, restricting bank lending to the personal and company sectors. However, the abolition of exchange controls has severely weakened the authorities' control over at least two components of the money supply: bank lending to the UK private sector and sterling lending to the overseas sector. Thus, in order to guarantee the achievement of tight targets for monetary expansion, the Government may well be forced to exercise greater restraint on public sector expansion than it is planning to do. In other words, to cut even further.

It may be said in passing that the abolition of exchange controls does not augur well for the expansion of UK industry which the public expenditure cuts are designed to achieve. Swiss bank accounts and Mediterranean villas may well prove a more agreeable home for the risk capital of small businessmen than the manufacturing industry of the West Midlands.

IN THE GOVERNMENT'S VIEW the control of the money supply is, of course, central to the control of inflation. Yet despite monetary restraint, the short term prospects for inflation are not very good. Earnings are rising at a rate of some 16-20 per cent a year, and there is little prospect of a sustained rise in the exchange rate to modify the increase in import prices. It seems likely that there will have been no significant drop in the rate of inflation from its current levels by the summer of next year. The 1980-81 wage round will therefore start from a situation in which the rate of inflation is of the order of 15 per cent. It is doubtful, to say the least, whether in such circumstances workers would be prepared to accept wage increases which were very much less than those of the 1979-80 wage round. And this would have consequences for inflation in the winter of 1980/81 and beyond as increases in costs due to higher wages passed through the system into higher prices.

There are two potential ways to moderate increases in money wages, and therefore cut real wages. The first is somewhat esoteric, although it carries substantial weight in Government and Whitehall circles. A firm commitment by the Government to a given monetary growth rate will, it is alleged, lead workers to expect that inflation will eventually fall into line with that growth rate, and that wage settlements above that rate will simply lead to unemployment. Wage claims will be moderated accordingly. The main problem with this argument is that there is no reliable evidence with which to support it.

More seriously it is argued that actual, as opposed to expected, increases in unemployment will lead to a sharp reduction in the level of wage settlements. However, over the range of unemployment levels experienced in post-war Britain, changes in unemployment have apparently had little or no effect on the level of wage settlements. No doubt there is some level of unemployment which would have a significant effect, although this does not seem to be less than 2 million and may well be much higher. The costs of such a level of unemployment are enormous.

The eminent American economist James Tobin, in the course of a frustrating interchange with Friedman in 1976, concluded:

> Distinctively monetarist policy recommendations stem less from theoretical or even empirical findings than from distinctive value judgments. The preferences revealed consistently in those recommendations are for minimizing the public sector and for paying a high cost in unemployment to stabilise prices.[1]

The policies and attitudes of the Thatcher Government are likely to confirm the accuracy of this statement.

[1] *Monetarism*, ed. J. L. Stein, North Holland, 1976.

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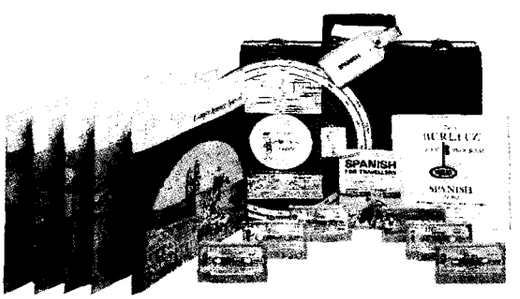

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LABOUR PARTY
Patrick Wintour

Left and Right unite against Callaghan and the whips

Packing the committees

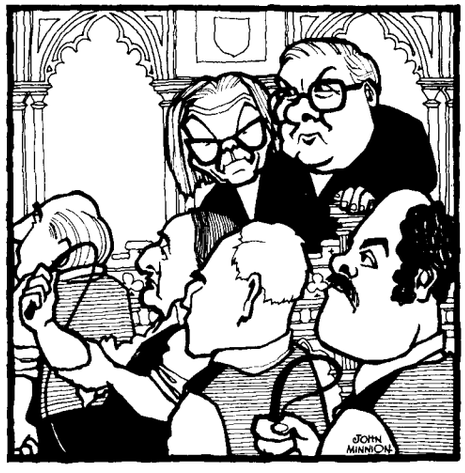
ABOUT A FORTNIGHT ago 12 bits of paper went up on the noticeboard of the Labour whips' office in the House of Commons. On them were the names of 45 Labour MPs. A week ago following protests the names were taken down and they have not been seen since. They represented Callaghan's choice, via the whips, of Labour MPs to sit on the 12 new-style select committees which the Tories set up in June to ensure more effective supervision of government departments. The contents of the list, despite having been stuck up for days, are now a secret. Their disappearance into the inner sanctum of the whips' office represents another defeat for the authority of Jim Callaghan and for the discipline of the whips. The successful protest at the arbitrary selection is part of an attempt by Labour MPs of both Left and Right to free the cowed Parliamentary Labour Party from a system based on authoritarianism and patronage. For both the Left and the Right, internal PLP democracy is, in itself, desirable but to the Right, fighting to retain the independence of the PLP from the rest of the Party, a respectably run democratic PLP is also a political necessity if the PLP is to be regarded as being worth saving.

For the bored, the recently dispossessed and the ambitious, a place on the new select committees is much coveted. The whips received over 127 applications from Labour MPs. For the reforms to mean anything the committees will need independent minded and well-informed members. Once selected the MPs will probably remain for the life of a parliament. When the whips' list went up many felt that Callaghanites excluded from front bench positions were now being given favoured treatment. Roger Stott, a Callaghan MP, was placed on the agriculture committee despite being a GPO telephone engineer with no previous interest in horticultural matters beyond gardening. By contrast John Home Robertson, Labour's only farmer, has been omitted. Tom McNally, Callaghan's political adviser and MP of 7 months' standing, was placed on foreign affairs. David Ennals, a former DHSS minister and old ally, was placed on the social services committee where he would presumably spend much of his time defending his own record in government.

Not all the lists were glaringly ill-balanced (the whips' treasury team is Michael English, Bob Sheldon, Austin Mitchell and Ken Woolmer while the Home Affairs Committee sensibly included Jo Richardson, Robert Kilroy-Silk and Alex Lyon). The argument is one of principles. The whips had unilaterally and prematurely produced the list. Anxious to minimise patronage and protect individual MPs' rights, the PLP had decided months ago that there should be full consultation before the Labour MPs were appointed to the committees. Yet the whips made their choice public before the PLP backbench subject groups had elected their chairmen, the natural people to consult.

Callaghan's behaviour was even more tactless in that he also decided to ignore the sensibilities of another interested party – the committee of selection of the House. This committee has always appointed the members of the standing committees which scrutinise particular bills. But in June the House had recommended that the committee of selection, currently made up of 5 Tories and four Labour MPs appointed by the whips, should also nominate members for the new select committees. As Michael English, one of the authors of this change explained: 'The idea was to protect MPs from being under the domination of whips on both sides.' When the House was debating this proposal Jeff Rooker and others berated the members of the committee of selection for not doing their job properly when they selected standing committee members for the last parliament. 'They had merely been rubber stamps for the whips' choice,' he said. Rooker tried to extract an assurance from members of the committee of selection that they would act independently of the dictates of the front benches in future.

Last Wednesday three Labour members of



the committee of selection, led by Ronald Brown, took these strictures to heart. All three have been hardy leadership loyalists in the past but they had clearly breathed in the fresh air of PLP democracy and enjoyed it. They walked out of the committee of selection meeting incensed that they were having an already published list foisted on them when they had not even been given the courtesy of seeing the list of all the applicants, and saying that if the whips wanted to forward a list of MPs for select committees of the House they could do so, but they had better not pretend that the choice had the authority of the committee of the selection.

THIS DISAGREEMENT HAS developed because the MP is such a vague creature. Indeed it is so vague that people have come to realise that it doesn't really exist. Last week, a ten man working party of Labour MPs was set up to go in search of the PLP meeting, or the instrument of decisions as Attlee called it. It will involve much exploration. The PLP has no agenda for its brief Thursday evening meetings, it circulates no minutes to members, usually less than half of the members attend these meetings, substantive policy is rarely discussed and votes are rarely taken and even more rarely recorded. Since there are no standing orders, there is little means to challenge these practices, a Catch 22 regularly employed by the leadership.

Recently two new MPs from Dundee, Ernie Ross and Willie McKelvey, amazed at the arcane informality and hence the power of the leadership, have been trying out a little reform. McKelvey says: 'It is appalling that the PLP has failed to ever exist. Indeed it is an occasion when members can troop along and hear some announcements'. The Scottish duo had fought unsuccessfuly to put a motion down at two PLP meetings to set up an elected working party to look at the PLP. Eventually on 1 November the parliamentary leadership succumbed at a PLP meeting of less than 70 and set up their own PLP inquiry, but they packed it almost as comprehensively as the National Executive Committee have been accused of fixing the composition of the grand commission of inquiry into the state of the party. Five loyalists have been appointed – Foot, Willey, Cocks, Rees and John Smith – and five are to be elected. It was never suggested by the PLP that the NEC should be consulted about the composition of the working Party.

There are now, as Phillip Whitehead wrote a fortnight ago in the NS, both Left and Right reformers in the PLP working against the whips' wise patronage. But the right-wing Manifesto Group can feel easier about elections than the Left since they have a natural majority in the PLP. Only last week the Right showed a new ruthlessness in electing themselves to chairmanships of the PLP subject groups with Cunningham, Radice, Thomas, Mason, Urwin, Cant and Dalyell taking the important chairmanships. Occasionally the Manifesto Group's show of strength took them to ridiculous lengths. For instance John Cartwright, a former Manifesto Group chairman, was elected to the chairmanship of the Defence Subject group with Ben Ford and Eric Ogden, two other right wingers, being elected as his deputies. Robin Cook and Bruce George, both interested in defence but leftish, were defeated. Ogden, Ford and Cartwright have between them in the last five years not made a single speech in the House on the subject of defence: Cook had made 11 and George seven. Indeed Cartwright lists many interests in *Labour's Election Who's Who*, on some of which he is indeed an expert – 'local government, housing, transport, the media, public ownership, consumer and environmental affairs'. There is no mention of defence, about which he is now to monitor the conduct of Labour's spokesman William Rodgers.

That kind of bloody-mindedness by the Manifesto Group is arguably an abuse of their majority. Furthermore the Right refuse to countenance any of their votes in the PLP becoming a matter of public knowledge. On the grounds of defending the independence of MPs the Right say all ballots must be secret. This is not a new issue. Perhaps when the working party discusses secret ballots Michael Foot will look up his biography of Bevan and see what his mentor had to say on the subject:

> You elect a Labour MP to represent you. In the secrecy of a party, he reaches decisions, you don't know about them, he is not allowed to say. That is a travesty of democracy; a representative of the people has no right to secrecy.

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EDUCATION
Rick Rogers

Councillors ponder the government's demands for cuts

Will London commit hara-kiri?

THE LABOUR-CONTROLLED Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) will be the first big-city authority to decide whether to go along with the Government's policy of 5 per cent cuts for 1980/1 or to risk confrontation. ILEA has to agree on one of three options by next month – no cuts, 3 per cent or 5 per cent cuts. Labour members are divided, and the issue has been further muddied by a Tory threat to break up ILEA into 13 borough-based authorities.

ILEA leader Ashley Bramall takes the threat seriously. His original proposal for 5 per cent cuts (£25 million) was based on the fear that not to make them would lead inexorably to break-up: 'The Government has made clear its intention to enforce ruthlessly its requirement for cuts by reduction in the rate support grant . . . ILEA receives no rate support grant but Government has a sanction ready to hand against us in the much discussed threat to break up the Authority.'

Bramall's line was cut up or be cut up. His 5 per cent list of cuts included reducing part-time teaching and non-teaching posts (£3 million); cutting capitation allowance to schools (£2.6 million); less maintenance of buildings (£2 million); paring ILEA administration (£1.6 million); cutting school transport and raising the price of school meals (£1.5 million); worsening the student/teacher ratio in art schools, colleges and polys (£1 million); and cutting discretionary student grants (£850,000). In all the proposals made, four basic principles were held to – no full-time staff redundancies; maintaining the pupil/teacher ratio; holding existing standards of provision (notably for nursery education, 16 to 19 year olds, disruptive pupils, the careers service); and keeping on the school meals service. But ILEA warns that 'reductions in expenditure of the order implied by some of the proposals could not be implemented without adversely affecting the level of service provided'.

The first cuts proposal was narrowly defeated through two Labour abstentions and two voting against – along with all the teacher co-opted members and, ironically, the Tories who objected to an 'anti-Government' clause in the proposal. Out of that defeat came the compromise to look at three options – and to wait until the 1980/1 rate support grant was announced before deciding which to go for.

Pressure is now on many Labour members not to make any cuts – a few councils (Hackney, Lambeth) have said they would be prepared to accept more on the rates to hold on to essential education services. But many members point to savings that could be made painlessly in schemes about to come to a natural end (such as paying independent school fees – a legacy of the city's comprehensive reorganisation period). Other savings could be found by making the service more efficient (investing in city-based sports centres rather than bussing pupils to the suburbs for games).

The fear is that a 'rational' debate on the cuts will not occur and that what *is* accepted will do more harm than necessary. And panicking over the cuts would play neatly into the Tories' hands.

The idea of breaking up the ILEA is said to have originated and been encouraged not so much by local Tories but from the centre-and was 'planted' in Tory-controlled Wandsworth and Westminster councils. Last July Wandsworth agreed to ask the Government to legislate for the borough to run its own schools by the end of 1981. Westminster has just decided to do the same – though few regard the plan with any real enthusiasm. Kensington & Chelsea is 'interested'. Whatever its origin, Heseltine-watchers claim the Environment Secretary wants to 'take out ILEA just to display his machismo'. Stuart Sexton, close political adviser to Education Secretary Carlisle, is also said to be 'obsessed' with breaking up ILEA. DES officials are currently fence-sitting on the issue.

ILEA defenders can point, for a start, to the 1978 Marshall enquiry into Greater London government (set up by the Tory GLC). The enquiry concluded that to disband ILEA would be 'neither practical nor desirable'. Tories now dismiss Marshall's report and want a second enquiry specifically on ILEA. But Marshall also criticised ILEA for being 'remote from the public it serves'. Some of the cuts now being proposed would greatly increase that remoteness.

One proposal is to amalgamate some of ILEA's divisional offices (DOs). The financial savings are marginal; other consequences are more serious. It was conceived as a move to head off the threat of break-up; it could backfire badly. Currently, DOs are generally coterminous with each borough. Merging offices and ending the neat borough-based structure would make dismantling ILEA more awkward. But DOs form the basis of contact between ILEA and the local community. That contact already varies greatly – reducing divisional offices would take ILEA even further away from its customers.

For example, Islington has developed a valuable network of local consultative schemes; Hackney has not. And Hackney paid the price in the recent 'falling-rolls' reorganisation debate. Another proposal rules that governors' meetings end by 9 p.m. – cutting cash but not the level of participation.

The success of the ILEA set-up is seen to be that it provides the advantages of scale (vital in a time of falling school rolls) balanced by a localised field administration which is, or can be, responsive to neighbourhood needs – financial and democratic. The danger now is that this will be undermined just when it is starting to work properly – for children in school and for parental and neighbourhood involvement.

There is no collective ILEA view on how many authorities will stand against the Government's 5 per cent; nor on how far Labour authorities that toe the Government line will take the blame for the effects of the cuts; nor on how far the Tories will go to punish rebel councils. But the immediate danger for many is in agreeing a hurried package of cuts that includes the seeds of ILEA's own destruction.

All our tomorrows: PART 2.

Tonight, TV EYE tackles another issue that will shape Britain in the 1980's.

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Next Week: Part 3 – Nuclear Powered Britain?

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NUCLEAR POWER
Brian Trench

Spanish plans to foist nuclear plant on poorest regions backfire

Massive protest may stall reactor

IF THE SPANISH government and the country's three electricity companies reckoned on a smooth path for their ambitious nuclear power programme in the poor region of Extremadura after the difficulties they have encountered in the more developed Basque country, Catalonia and Valencia, their calculations were wrong. The opposition to two nuclear power stations in the western provinces of Badajoz and Caceres was, indeed, slow to get off the ground. But it has now assumed sufficient proportions to persuade both the Socialist Party (PSOE) and the Communist Party to make an exception to their general support of nuclear power in a national energy plan. Even the provincial executive of the government party, the UCD, has asked for a re-think of the Valdecaballeros project. And four separate reports from departments of the UCD-dominated regional authority which were released last week all emphasised the dangers and drawbacks over any supposed advantages of siting nuclear power plants in Extremadura. The 'Nuclear No' stickers are even in the windows of the authority's offices at Badajoz.

For several months there have been demonstrations and protest meetings in towns and villages along the valley of the river Guadiana, on whose banks the Valdecaballeros station is being built. It was first mooted in 1976; construction work began earlier this year without formal approval, but this was given retrospectively on 25 August. The reaction was immediate: representatives of 130 local authorities went into a ten-day permanent session in the town hall of Villanueva de la Serena; 30,000 people defied a ban to demonstrate in the town, while another 15,000 held protests wherever the National Guard blocked their way to the town.

Apart from provoking unprecedented popular mobilisation and uncommon agreement between the three political parties – at least, at local level – the Spanish nuclear plans for Extremadura (two power stations) and for the neighbouring province of Salamanca (one reactor on the Portuguese border; an enrichment plant and a dump) have had other unusual political effects. They have awakened a dormant independence movement in Extremadura and led to rare discussions between local representatives from Spain and Portugal. There is much resentment at the fact that Spain's poorest region, with little industry and backward agriculture, is providing sites for power plants whose output will be consumed in the industrial and urban centres of Madrid and Seville. Political contacts between Spain and Portugal are surprisingly undeveloped at any level, but, following last month's meeting between local authorities on both sides of the border, anti-nuclear activists from Badajoz attended a Lisbon meeting called to oppose the possible re-activation of Portugal's own suspended nuclear power plans.

The Spanish Socialist Party has protested in the Cortes that the go-ahead for the Valdecaballeros plant is illegal on several counts. They claim there is a massive contradiction between the unloading of national energy plans on to Extremadura and the agricultural development programmes for the region to which the government is committed. Eleven nuclear projects have been frozen, they say, because of protests; Valdecaballeros was not frozen because the protests came late.

The Communist Party's parliamentary group entered their appeal against the authorisation with technical criticisms of the type of reactor – a boiling water reactor (BWH, Mark III), to be supplied by General Electric. The party claims that all such reactors in the USA have been closed down for inspection and that the green light for Valdecaballeros without a new look at the specifications makes nonsense of the appointment of a Council for Nuclear Safety some weeks earlier.

The mayors of 17 towns in the neighbourhood of the Almaraz nuclear power station, now almost ready for commissioning, declared three weeks ago that they were opposed to the start-up for the station's two reactors until and unless proper safety guarantees were forthcoming. The representatives of the 41 towns in the district around the power plant were called to another meeting last weekend.

Further north, in the province of Salamanca, and closer to the Portuguese border, a site at Sayago has been ear-marked for another nuclear power station. With over 1,000 hectares in Salamanca in their possession, the Spanish nuclear authorities hope to complete three different projects there. Again, they have faced the united opposition of townspeople and peasants. But the Madrid magazine, *Interviu*, recently revealed that radioactive material from Russia had already been delivered in April to a site close to Ciudad Rodrigo in Salamanca.

The Ministry of Industry and Energy has not been idle in the propaganda battle, however. They recently placed a series of three double-page advertisements in the local Badajoz paper, insisting that there were no grounds to the fears that the river Guadiana – a source of water for animals and humans over a wide area – would be contaminated by being used to cool the Valdecaballeros reactors. The Ministry also insists that there is no alternative to meeting 37.7 per cent of projected electricity needs in 1987 (a target which they have set even before they become subject to formal EEC pressures).

However, Juan Jose Pena Bernal, of the University of Extremadura, points out that the projected demand has been revised downwards drastically between 1975 and 1979 with a consequent reduction in the number of nuclear reactors needed from 17 to 10. The commissioning of the Almaraz and Valdecaballeros plants would mean that more electricity was being generated from nuclear power than was allowed for in this year's revision of the energy plans.

The French, who import electricity from Spain, have shown a particular interest in the development of nuclear power programmes in Spain and Portugal. One of the drops in the 'rainfall' of promised investment for Portugal which President Eanes brought back from Paris last month was an 'offer' of support for the building of nuclear power stations in return for supplies of Portuguese uranium which are not, as yet, being mined. France's African policies put security of uranium supplies from that continent in doubt. And with the cancellation of Iranian orders, which they had hoped Khomeini might reverse, they badly need buyers for their reactor technology. It has been suggested that projects being launched in Portugal by Renault could help the French find customers in that part of the world.

First victory for East Europe's anti-nuclear lobby

Gabriel Ronay writes: The first successful battle against nuclear expansion in Eastern Europe has been won in Yugoslavia, where the government has a firm commitment to a long-term nuclear energy development programme.

Yugoslavia is poor in energy resources and the country's power shortage is further accentuated by a lack of a nationwide power grid (which is to be completed sometime in the nebulous future). The heavy industries in the city of Split, on the Dalmatian coast, are chronically short of energy and plagued by periodic power failure. To resolve this, the Union of Yugoslav Electrical Enterprises proposed in 1974 to build the country's second nuclear power plant on the island of Vir, just off the town of Zadar and the holiday beaches of the Adriatic.

As there was no opposition to the building of Yugoslavia's first nuclear plant with the aid of the Westinghouse Corporation at Krsko, in the Slovenian Republic, the authorities were surprised when, in 1978, under strong popular pressure, the Local Assembly of Zadar removed the nuclear power plant from its long-term energy development plan. It was an open challenge to the republican and federal authorities who did not quite know how to handle public opposition to a plan approved by the ruling Communist League. In a first reaction, the federal authorities accused the local authorities of 'caving in' under short-sighted local pressures.

The Belgrade newspaper *Politika*, which first reported this unusual conflict, said that owing to 'insufficient information, people were afraid of all the possible dangers emanating from a nuclear mishap, and now, it seems, the fire of resistance has spread.'

Public opinion was singularly ill-informed because the party's general directive for handling the nuclear issue tried to reassure all concerned about the safety of nuclear energy in a style befitting Big Brother talking to his ignorant and not too bright little brother.

The reasons of the local people were perfectly clear and their case closely argued in the Regional Assembly. They cared about their clean sea, booming tourist trade and their unpolluted environment and not a bit about the future benefits of nuclear power. Fear of radiation and a nuclear mishap mobilised public opinion long before the Harrisburg accident, and since thousands of local people working in West Germany as *Gastarbeiters* saw with their own eyes that anti-nuclear protests can be effective, they began putting increased pressure on their representatives in the local legislature: under the 1974 Yugoslav constitution local political and economic organisations can oppose the republican and federal planning decisions.

At first, the anti-nuclear lobby fought under the guise of local economic interests clashing with republican and national economic interests. Because of this, the Croatian government, which represents the republican authority on the Dalma-

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tian coast, refused to budge, and the economic conflict rapidly gained strong political overtones. This politicisation of the issue, coupled with the growing militancy of the public, brought results.

Earlier this year, the executive committee of the Zadar City Assembly officially expressed concern over the adverse local effects of the building of a nuclear plant and formally demanded that the Croatian Republican Government and the Union of Yugoslav Electrical Enterprises drop the Zadar plan. After public protests in support of this stand, the federal government in Belgrade sent senior scientists to Zadar to convince them of the error of their ways and to reassure them that there was no danger from the planned nuclear power plant. Last winter, the scientists had attended a Comecon conference on the safety problems of nuclear reactors at Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia, and were therefore well primed.

They reasoned, and tried to prove, that a nuclear reactor cannot explode; the planned station would not pollute the Adriatic or consume excessive amounts of oxygen; there was no radiation threat to the environment and since the radioactive elements cannot escape from their tight circuit, there would be no danger to the hotels and beaches; radioactive gases have a very short lifespan and by the time they reach nearby human settlements, they are filtered by the atmosphere; finally, the proposed safety belt around the plant was a simple precaution 'for any improbable defect'.

The arguments of the scientists did not wash in the post-Harrisburg climate of opinion and in June the Zadar Local Assembly unanimously rejected the Croatian government's plan. It also took the unprecedented decision to state that Zadar would refuse any further co-operation with the republican and federal authorities on the project. As a result, Mr Rade Pavlovic, the head of the Croatian Electricity Board, announced on 27 June that the government had dropped the plan to build the second Yugoslav nuclear power plant off Zadar. The electricity board was therefore putting forward a new location for the plant at Prevlaka, away from the holiday beaches of Dalmatia. Whether the people of Prevlaka will accept this dubious gift remains to be seen.

This clear-cut victory for the opponents of nuclear expansion comes at a time when the Soviet Union and its Comecon partners are speeding up their nuclear energy programme on an unprecedented scale and reassuring their citizens that Harrisburg-type accidents cannot happen in 'a socialist system'.

However, last week no less an authority than the journal *Kommunist*, the Communist Party's theoretical organ, gave the lie to the mindlessly optimistic and patently untruthful official Soviet position, revealing the growing anxiety of the country's scientific community. The publication of an article, signed by two senior scientists, on the possibly harmful effects of nuclear power on the environment is a politcal departure of great significance.

Dr Nikolai Dolezhal and Dr Yuri Koyakin voiced for the first time the thus far unmentionable fear that the problems of storing nuclear wastes had not been solved satisfactorily. They also admitted that nuclear power stations were on wrong sites. These should be grouped together in vast energy complexes, far from populated areas, they suggested. At present, these plants used up an unacceptable amount of water and prime agricultural land and they may be damaging the environment. In an unprecedented admission of difficulties posed by officialdom's nuclear dream, they said: 'The growth of negative aspects and consequences (of the state nuclear programme) is already complicating the solution of some economic problems.' East Europe's nuclear attitudes may after all be changing faster than the Kremlin could have foreseen.

Correction

In last week's article by Gitta Sereny ('The men who whitewash Hitler'), p.672, we should have said: 'The facilities provided housing for just a few German *SS*, less than 100 *Waffen*-SS overseers, and a constantly-changing group of a few *hundred* "work-Jews".'

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Letting the old stay at home

There is no need to dump the old in institutions. KATHLEEN GIBBERD reports on two alternative projects.

WHEN MY TWO OLD FRIENDS (I will call them Joanna and Leila) moved into their respective old people's homes I could hardly be reassured. It was six years ago and they were both 80. Joanna's was a local authority home recommended by her doctor who said it was for people with her tastes. An odd mistake; Joanna was an inveterate reader but in six years I never saw any other 'resident' with a book. Joanna read on until her eyesight failed. Then she shut her eyes like the others in the lounge. Many find it the best way. When death reduced the circle of silent people, desultory conversation occurred and Joanna added her mordant wit to the general plaintiveness. She died last year in the bedroom she shared with two other women. My visits then ceased, but I wonder sometimes about her fellow residents, especially the former machine fitter, who bought Joanna's cigarettes, and the tall, aloof man who came to her funeral.

My other friend, Leila, went into a home run by a voluntary organisation, seizing the chance of a room to herself. She thought it was the thing to do if you are a widow, childless, and turned 80. She too was a reader – and an inveterate letter-writer. She lived in her bedsitting room and was, she said, never lonely. But from the start she was oppressed by the recurring spectacle of ageing people filing into meals, everyone's infirmity a warning to others. At table conversation foundered between deaf people or lapsed into clichés. 'Don't talk to me about old age – it's the *young* I want', Leila wrote. Happily her great-nephew, a kindred spirit, would tear down to her on a borrowed motor cycle, simply to talk for three hours. Similarly with Joanna who once showed me a letter from a young man with whom she formerly listened to music. It ended: 'Please live another twenty years.'

Leila worried to the end about the sadness of old people's homes and refused to see any alternative. She died this year in a nursing home, peaceful but unconvinced.

Visiting these two friends added poignancy to letters from strangers in other homes (*'the* most unhappy year in my long life', wrote one) and to my impressions of other homes that I felt impelled to visit. The picture was depressingly uniform. A circle of impassive people with nothing to say to one another. A house with no laughter except in the kitchen. Identical days interrupted by visits from uninterested doctors, or local ladies offering bingo. Bright young day helpers scattering endearments. Brave matrons, one step up in the career structure, faltering, perhaps, in their newly acquired jargon each time someone died. Some homes were better than others and some men and women, broken by poor health or hungry for physical warmth and security, found in them what they seemed to need. But very many, like Joanna and Leila, were dismayed, and it was not a matter of social class

Camera Press

or education. Increasingly people who were beginning to be old dreaded this climax to life but thought it inevitable.

But their fatalism, like Leila's, was becoming unjustified. Throughout the 1970s alternatives to the residential home were increasingly available. Most noticeable was the increase in old people's flats and bungalows, supervised by a warden. The tenants hoped to stay to die there, and often succeeded. Hardly noticed at all were experiments in mixed-age accommodation – as for instance a block of flats, flatlets and bedsitters built by the Bournemouth Free Church Council to accommodate people aged 18 to 80. Applicants are selected for their willingness to help one another (hardly practicable when all are old, although sometimes expected) but a proportion must come from the local authority's waiting list – which is common practice.

BUT BY 1978 the pressure of inflation was forcing attention on a new idea. This derived from the surprising revelation that many (perhaps most) old people would prefer to remain where they are – in their own homes – if only they could have adequate help. Two outstanding experiments have shown that this is both feasible and relatively cheap.

The first was the Community Research Project, devised by Kent Social Services department and operating in Ramsgate. Quite simply it set out to recruit part-time helpers to do specific jobs for old people living at home who were 'at risk of entering residential care'. A young staff of three both organises and monitors the project – whose charm is its extreme flexibility. Thus for a widow, partly paralysed, it fills in the gaps when there are no meals on wheels; for a nervous and incontinent woman who has difficulty in eating it provides two cheerful young friends, one of whom makes her bed and has breakfast with her and the other sees her through lunch when the home help is not there. But it also performs more unexpected services, such as paying a daughter her loss of part-time salary to enable her to look after her parents, or providing someone to exercise an old man's dog, or simply supplying company.

The helpers are paid modest fees and there is no shortage of helper applicants. Payment makes them bound by a simple but precise contract which can be ended at a few days' notice. The public cost for even a very disabled client can be no more than £14 a week. But the clients themselves pay nothing.

No other authority seems to have followed Kent in creating a new category of helpers, but many have extended their domiciliary services. Only East Sussex, it seems, has organised a monitored experiment in extension. It operates in part of Hove where for the past year a special fleet of 20 Home Helps has undertaken to do *any* work at any time as required. They are paid at the standard rates and clients contribute according to an assessment. In this case the public cost is borne jointly by the Social Services and the Health Authority – a logical cooperation as clients are often a hospital rather than residential home 'risk'. A memorable example of a client whose remaining pleasure in life was preserved for him by this scheme was a man who walked with a frame and spoke with difficulty, but whose furniture was covered with classical records ready for playing. What would have become of him in home or hospital?

The average weekly cost per client of this Hove Intensive Domiciliary Care Project is £26 and the average number of clients – 64 – would have filled more than a fairly large home. East Sussex reckon the weekly cost in a home is £44; Kent puts the figure much higher. The saving is anyway striking and doubtless this explains why both schemes are to continue and the Hove project to expand.

What struck me most about these two projects was the unique relationship between helper and helped. Unique because nowhere else is the human dignity of the recipient manifestly preserved. Elsewhere one has seen elderly men bossed about by jolly matrons, elderly women treated with condescension by wardens half their age. Not always, but too often. And even the much praised good neighbour is apt to decide rather than consult. In these two projects both helper and helped meet on equal terms and if they are ill-matched either side can ask for a change.

But how long will it take before a sentimental public stops wringing its hands because old people have nowhere to go, while old people themselves do not want to go anywhere at all?

Kathleen Gibberd was the NEW STATESMAN's Education Correspondent in the 1960s.

The Sayings of Père Patriarche

"An unreliable wine can cause more mischief than an eccentric chef."

PÈRE PATRIARCHE
RED & WHITE VIN DE TABLE
BOTTLED IN FRANCE BY PATRIARCHE
For once, don't worry about the wine.

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London Diary

☐ As Chairman Hua achieved lift-off amid tremendous salvoes of acclaim and saliva, I was given the transcript of a recent trial in Peking. The defendant, Wei Jingsheng, drew a stiff sentence for conversing with foreigners during the Sino-Vietnamese war and thereby breaching China's version of the Official Secrets Act. He pointed out in his defence speech that mentioning the name of a Chinese general to a diplomat was hardly classified information, but Mr William Whitelaw and the Chinese judiciary are at one about what constitutes a secret. They also seem to agree about what Wei Jingsheng calls 'Democratic socialism'. Very dangerous stuff indeed, for the promulgation of which he and his paper were prosecuted. It really is intolerable that we on the Left, who have defended Rudolf Bahro and others almost alone, are accused by the Tories and the press of wanting 'an East European state', while the Thatchers and Carringtons cast their votes in favour of Pol Pot at the United Nations. Who dares to talk of double standards in this context? Not that the Conservatives are entirely inconsistent. Their policy of loving up to Chile, and of ending the aid programme for South American refugees, sits very well with their general line on the rights of man. Still, it must make some kind of foreign policy record to be grovelling to Pinochet and Pol Pot at the same time.

☐ What's come over Roy Hattersley? His sense of proportion seems to have deserted him entirely. He oozes around the place calling for Labour's moderates to unite – you must have noticed him. But last week he made a terrible fuss about having to speak second to David Owen at the Cambridge Union. Alas for Ratters, somebody has to speak last, and the committee decided on Owen as having held the senior ministerial post. Hattersley, who had already agreed to be billed, complained a lot about this but did not actually withdraw until three hours before the debate was due to start. Two points here. One, it's really bad manners to treat student audiences in this way, when they have such a hard time getting front bench speakers. Royboy would not have relished the straw poll I took among Cambridge Fabians about his prospects, general bearing and so forth. Second, this sort of thing does great harm to the cause of Labour moderation. In desperation at the last minute, the Union asked me instead.

☐ Talking of moderates (and who isn't these days?) I have a small suggestion for a realignment of the centre-Right. In Sir Cecil Parrott's fine biography of Jaroslav Hasek, creator of the Good Soldier Schweik, he tells some stories of Hasek's own political adventures. It seems that, in the Austro-Hungarian elections of 1911, Hasek and some cronies formed and registered the Party of Moderate Progress within the Bounds of Law. Its election platform was a flawless exercise in social democracy.

Article One. Moderate Progress within the Bounds of Law.

Article Two. Greater Strictness with the Poor.

Article Three. Nationalisation of House Porters and Sextons.

Article Four. Down with Lay Creditors.

Article Five. Credit Banks to be placed in the hands of the clergy. This programme would need very little updating to get say, William Rodgers to meet the challenge of the Eighties. But if one is looking for a real Schweikian leader of all that is most base, chubby and opportunist in British affairs, I am afraid that the palm can only be awarded to one man. . . .

☐ Scorning the charge of elitism, I have always regarded football as a reactionary sport, not to mention a boring one. The sight of Ian Smith in the Crystal Palace directors' box for the 'Big Match' last weekend did nothing to correct my deviation. Not only did the man earn himself a few flattering camera-angles during the game, but he was given the chance to deliver a short burst into the microphone afterwards. In the nature of these occasions it was possible for him to affect a certain 'good fellow' style as a result. So I found myself ringing Mr Raymond Bloye, chairman of Crystal Palace, on Monday, Whose idea had the invitation been? 'We get somebody every week . . . we're absolutely non-political . . . we just cater for football'. Yes, but who had invited him? 'He was at Tottenham last week . . . there's nothing unusual about this'. Mr Bloye, did he get invited or did he just come? 'I can't see what difference that makes.' I can. 'Well, as far as I know it was all arranged by the CID.' Oh I see.

☐ Let us throw hypocrisy to the winds. In Andrew Boyle's *Climate of Treason*, which describes but does not name two senior 'moles', the real position is as follows. 'Maurice' is Sir Anthony Blunt, formerly Keeper of the Queen's Pictures and a distinguished art historian in his own right. 'Basil' is Dr Wilfred Mann, a modestly obscure physicist. Both men, as far as anybody can tell, are wholly innocent. The source for 'Maurice' is Goronwy Rees, who having written a book of his own on the affair is choosing an odd time to make this disclosure through a third party. The source for 'Basil' is James Angleton, the paranoid former head of the CIA who claims that he turned Wilfred Mann into a loyal double (or triple) agent for 'our side'. I can only add one small fragment to this mound of dead dogs and petty sneaking. Sir Anthony Blunt's entry in *Who's Who* comprises a fairly decent Foreign Office record, and a huge list of books published under his name. In amongst the volumes on Poussin and other painters is a work entitled *Picasso's Guernica*. If that doesn't prove it, I don't know what does.

☐ It is not the policy of this column to print 'plugs' for anybody. But if you don't read *Fire Force Exposed* (Anti-Apartheid Movement £1.95) you will have a hard time understanding why the armed forces are such an issue in the Zimbabwe talks. And if you don't get *West Irian, East Timor and Indonesia* (Minority Rights Group 75p) you will go about thinking that Cambodia is the only current genocide in Asia. Reading what the 'moderates' can get up to when unobserved is an experience nobody should deny themselves. And had it occurred to you what sinister initials the Selous Scouts have?

☐ Did the Americans know that the Shah had cancer all along? The answer, given the predominance of Americans in Middle Eastern medicine, must be 'yes'. (The answer 'no' would of course mean that all that intelligence money was wasted.) So they let a dying maniac shoot thousands of his own people in the streets. Fair enough. But did they, I wonder, tell David Owen and the British Foreign Office? That tricky moment last spring, when the Americans were edging away and the British were left holding the puking baby, takes on a new reality in the light of the great reaper. Who'd be a poodle?

☐ I was in Ankara last week, surveying one of the less-noticed tragedies of the European Left. There was the wreckage of Bulent Ecevit's government, after nearly four years of compromise and drift. There was the new and gloating reactionary majority, unable to believe its luck. There was the populace, buffeted by inflation andshortage, and unable even to buy the traditional coffee because of the black market. There were the fascists waiting in the wings, with all the gruesome panoply of violence and racial supremacy. There were the unions, till bruised from a mixture of 'restraint', 'loyalty' and shopfloor revolt. There were the men from the IMF, applying the standard mixture of deflation and monetarism which is held to work for any country from Tanzania to Portugal. And there was Ecevit himself, faced with the resignation of his party executive, angrily denying the necessity for a special party congress to discuss the debacle, but forced into holding it against his will. Then I camehome. I still can't think what it was remindingme of.

☐ If asked for an opinion on liturgy and the glory of the language, amongthe last people I would consult would be TedShort (monosyllabic), Michael Foot (verbal diarrhoea artist), Lord Carrington (slippery ooze) or William Whitelaw (flannelling fool). Yet all these, plus Glenda Jackson and Alan Bennett, have felt moved to defend the Book ofCommon Prayer and the Authorised Version of the Bible from the mealy-mouthed revisions imposed by Canterbury. Many people feelinstinctively in support of this petition, because it purports to uphold the muscularity of English against the limp-wrists and lame-brains of the C. of E. I'm sure they are wrong. Let those who mourn the Latin Mass, the people are admitting that religious belief less convincing if not expressed in sonorousand admirable terms. Nothing can take Cranmer away from the formation of our usage. It 'the sweet mediocrity of our native churchforfeited any right to it a very long time ago.

Christopher Hitchens

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, 2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ I should like to nominate Mr Ian Smith as 'Man of the Year'. Leaving aside the political issues involved in Rhodesia, on which I am incompetent to comment, it is a pleasant change to find any man in political life today who will stand upfor his own beliefs. – Letter in *Daily Telegraph* (T. Hepher).

☐ There are real live negro extras sensibly economising on the universal black boxmake-up. – *Guardian* (A. J. Dunn)

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Publishing be damned

From Christopher Falkus, deputy chairman of Weidenfeld & Nicolson

Your personal attack on Lord Weidenfeld (NS 2 November) emerges as the most distorted perspective of a man whose success in creating an internationally famous publishing company, building a remarkably distinguished list of authors, and providing employment for many people who admire his achievements, appears to provoke only the most partial representation from your reporters. I wish to dissociate myself entirely from the implication that Lord Weidenfeld lacked the support of myself or other senior colleagues in company decisions; to express my disgust at the parading of misleading figures which should under any circumstances be regarded as matters of trust and confidence between contracting parties; and also to express my contempt for a one-sided piece of journalism which, in my opinion, would never have been acceptable by the standards you used to represent.

To correct here, in this letter, errors perpetrated would merely be to descend to similar breaches of confidence which I – and I think any fair-minded reader – would deplore. Such corrections will presumably await another time and another place.

91 Clapham High Street, London SW4

From Reg Davis-Poyner

I feel that your readers could be misled into believing, after seeing your article in last week's issue on Lord George Weidenfeld's publishing ploys and problems, anyone other than myself will be publishing Michael Foot. I wish to confirm that I am and will continue to be his publisher.

20 Garrick Street, WC2

From Lord Longford

As one of your longtime readers, I am aware that one does not enjoy the NEW STATESMAN because of its well-balanced tributes to eminent persons. But surely there are civised limits to personal vilification where no concivable public interest is served. The vicious attack on George Weidenfeld has shocked many people who, like myself, know what a false picture it offers the public. To have come from another country without resources; to have built up one of the most distinguished publishing houses in this country from scratch; to have shown an extraordinary capacity for encouraging authors, famous and otherwise – all this surely represents an achievement not to be sneered at. I would hope that in certain moods you yourself would think so.

Sidgwick & Jackson, 1 Tavistock Chambers, Bloomsbury Way, London WC1

New ideas for the NHS

From Andy Alaswski and Daniel Vulliamy

Ruth Levitt's diagnosis of the problems of the NHS (NS 19 October) so accurate that her prescriptions may also appeal. We believe the latter are unrealistic and dangerous, although they will surely delight health administrative and DHSS officials.

We welcome Levitt's analysis that contrary to the general belief of academics, NHS workers and the general public, the medical profession controls the means and ends of the NHS and hence determines the pattern of resource allocation. It does this individually though 'clinical autonomy' and collectively through its domination of all the main decision-making bodies in the Service.

Levitt seems not to have noticed that over the last two decades there has been a series of attempts to challenge this medical dominance through structural reforms: individual professions in the 1960s, culminating in the 1974 reorganisation. This strategy, which can usefully be called managerialism, has been totally ineffective in the face of medical resistance. It has failed to deliver its main target, cost control. It has not redistributed any resources. None seriously argues it has increased efficiency. And it has led directly to the changed climate of industrial relations in the NHS which Levitt bemoans.

The real failure of managerialism is to provide an ideological alternative to medical domination. Managerialism does not challenge the right of the elite of the medical profession to decide the means and ends of the NHS. In fact, it reinforces medical domination under the guise of the apparently common-sensical search for efficiency.

Levitt's proposals fit firmly within the managerialist tradition. We already have peer group monitoring (of doctors by doctors); it is useless and Levitt has no proposals for making it effective. Her calls for increased public scrutiny via better informed health authority members and the DHSS Parliamentary Select Committee rely on at least two crucial assumptions. The first is that doctors will do exactly what they have refused to do since 1947 and simply concede gracefully. The second assumption is that the DHSS, RHAs and AHAs are the places where decisions are actually made.

This need is not for an alternative structure, but for an alternative ideology. This already exists in a nascent form within the Labour Movement. Whilst lacking the clear articulation of the existing medical model, the evidence of several trade unions to the recent Royal Commission indicates the germs of a Socialist definition of the ends of the NHS. And, increasingly during industrial action we detect equivalent articulation at local level by NHS trade union representatives.

Institute for Health Studies, University of Hull

Superbread

From Marion Woolfson

As Mrs Claybourne (Letters 26 October) has challenged me to say in which way the 'additives' of wheat germ and bran make 'my' bread 'more nutritious or delicious' than hers, I feel obliged to reply even though it is obvious that Mrs Claybourne did not understand, or did not read properly, what I wrote. I bake various types of bread but the recipe I gave was, as I pointed out, for the benefit of 'those who suffer from intestinal problems caused by a diet of refined foods and an inadequate intake of natural fibres'. These unfortunates (who seem to comprise the majority of the population) whose innards have been bunged up by a lifetime of incorrect eating, are not going to be cured simply by substituting wholemeal bread for white, and so I advocated additional bran to take the place of the huge quantites of laxatives they have been in the habit of consuming. Also, as their diet is inevitably deficient in the B vitamins, I recommended additional wheatgerm which is one of the best natural sources (the others are liver, brewers' yeast and brown, unpolished rice).

Ideally, of course, bulk and minerals and vitamins should be provided by a good, balanced diet of protein, whole grains and a plentiful supply of fresh fruit and vegetables. But those who, for one reason or another, continue to eat refined, devitalised 'foods' will be able to counteract at least some of the harmful effects by consumption of the 'additives' I suggested. As for Mrs Claybourne's feeling that she 'ought to boycott any expensive commercial separation of wheat, not encourage it', this separation has taken place and is taking place and, until such time as it is banned by law, one must utilise it intelligently to combat its harmful effects and those of other nutritional follies.

Incidentally, may I add, for the benefit of the novice baker, that I forgot to include in my recipe the information that the dough should be left to rise in a warm place.

35 Camden Mews, London NW1

From Dr T. H. Grenby

I am not a regular reader of the NEW STATESMAN but I have just seen Hannah Wright's article on 'The Scandal of British Bread' (12 October) and I think she needs putting straight on some of her nutritional ideas.

First it is misleading to say that our bread has been transformed from a thousand-year-old combination of wheat flour, yeast, salt and water, to a polluted and spongy money-spinner. It is still made with the same four basic ingredients. Small quantities of other substances are added to it for specific purposes so as to improve its properties and nutritive value, but this certainly does not constitute pollution. Wheaten bread made from hard flour should have a spongy texture resulting from the entrapped bubbles of gas produced by the yeast before baking. As to whether bread is a money-spinner, I am not qualified to comment, but from the later part of Miss Wright's article I gained the impression that the profit margins on bread are extremely slim.

I can't see why Miss Wright should find the exact contents of a mouthful of bread hard to discover. The information would be freely available from technical sources rather than the marketing men she spoke to, from a range of reference books and tables of food composition, and from the world-esteemed experts at the Flour Milling and Baking Research Association. They would all be able to tell her that it is grossly misleading to claim that British white bread has only two and a half useful nutrients. Without getting too technical, it ought to be made clear that bread, no matter whether white or brown, is an excellent source of energy by virtue of its starch content, and a useful source of protein, calcium, iron and at least three different B vitamins. Its special advantage is that it is good value – a meal based on say, bread and butter, cheese and salad or fruit is likely to be nutritionally better balanced than the traditional meat and two veg. plus sweet, and it will certainly be a lot cheaper.

The use of bleach in flour is a thorny problem, but in this country there has traditionally been a high demand for whiter-than-white bread and flour, which the milling and baking industry do their best to fulfil. I think this demand may date from the days when there were few checks on food quality and adulteration. Consumers had to judge these things for themselves, and began to associate whiteness with purity.

Miss Wright has misinterpreted my research on the effects of bread on teeth. The main findings were that neither white nor wholemeal bread damaged the teeth. Sugar was the harmful agent and continued to cause decay when it was eaten along with any cereal food, no matter whether refined or unrefined. I never found any clear difference between white and wholemeal bread in their effects on the teeth.

Current nutritional thinking, like many other of our social attitudes, runs in fashions. Today it is fashionable in certain circles to extol the virtues of a fibrous diet, lament the loss of wheat bran and germ on milling white flour and point to superior bowel movements in Assamese rice farmers and others in the third world. This makes a good story for consumerists and those among us who are understandably bewildered by modern technology and dubious of the motives of the large commercial combines that supply us with so much of our bread and other food. However, it is by no means certain that our general health would improve if we started substituting wholemeal bread for white. Many other dietary factors are involved. In spite of their supposedly trouble-free intestines, people in many developing countries suffer from a whole range of nutritional ailments no longer seen in this country.

We can conclude that there are very few examples of nutritional deficiency diseases in this country, and that our diet, including bread as a basic and desirable food, is adequate for our needs.

Guys Hospital, London SE1

Name-dropping

From David Ealey

I was pleased to see my letter on capital gains published in last week's NEW STATESMAN, but was less pleased to notice that you had left my name out. We all like to see our names in print – please cater for this harmless human weakness.

6 Marine Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Track records

Every so often as I stand waiting, dressed in my trim and all-purpose dark blue uncrushable London suiting, on platform 5 of St David's Station, Exeter, for the train that is going to whizz me, and non-stop if I'm lucky, to the bright lights and welcoming arms of Great Turnstile, I hear a romantic sound. I am not referring to the hum and hiss of the coffee-making machine in the buffet (say it BUFFY), or the melodious chords of some hippy practising on his mandolin as, after a prolonged Devonian holiday at the taxpayers' expense, he makes his way back to base (we get such musical drop-outs in droves in the southwest at all periods of the year, never shy about forcing their inexpert twangings on the ears of others). Nor am I referring to the creaking of expensive and porter-carried luggage as a plainly uppercrust lady traveller stakes out a claim among those waiting ('The firsts usually stop just here. I require a non-smoker'). The sound that I mean is that made by the wheel-tapper, that jolly and metallic clang that is now decreasingly heard.

When I recently drew attention on this page to the vanished charms, coupled with its risks and perils, of the Orient Express, a kind correspondent was not slow to speak up in favour of the numerous delights and joys of British Rail. He did not mean, rich and keen though they are, present-day pleasures but was harking back to the days when it was not what I suppose we must call, unattractive word, 'a conglomerate' but was sharply individual, with its GWR and its LNER (such agreeable and different colours they all had), each competing with the others in efforts to please the rail passengers with luncheon-baskets (for three bob you got a great hunk of chicken, ham, salad, rolls and butter and a half bottle of claret) and lavatory carriages and footwarmers filled with hot water and heat-producing chemical crystals. And in those days, the air rang with, to me, romantic sounds – the aforesaid wheel-tapper, the banging of milk churns, the buffer-clangings of goods trains (and where have *they* all gone to, may I ask?), the rattle of wires beneath the platform's edge as the signal was tugged down, the joyous puffing sound of the engine as you steamed away, and the comforting doodly-doo of the carriage wheels as they met the joins in the rails.

One of modern British Rail's main concerns, in addition to increasing the fares, appears to have been to eliminate noise. The wheels of the High Speed Trains do not seem to demand tapping and their carriages are relatively sound-proofed (I regret not being allowed to adjust or otherwise influence in any way the heat, or otherwise, of the air within). The rails on which the wheels run are continuous – I thought that made them buckle in hot sunshine – and the largely electrified signals no longer require rattling wires. Milk churns go by road, diesel engines make little sound, and High Speed Trains merely hiss like angry cobras.

But praise for British Rail must be lavished where praise is due, even though one facet of it reminds one of the only good word ever said by foreigners for frightful old Mussolini. The Inter-City (idiotic name) trains do, in my experience, run splendidly to time. And it is now possible, with the aid of cars both ends, for me to get from the very depths of Devon ('Myrtlebank' is a full ten miles from any known centre of activity) to the heights of Highgate, where I happily stay when in London, in just under three hours. The distance involved is not far short of 200 miles and, apart from the fact that I don't much care for fast travel, this is very good going.

It is cheering to discover that the absence of steam has not done much, if anything, to dampen the keenness of railway enthusiasts. At almost any hour every station platform seems to have its quota of young persons busily noting down the numbers, I suppose, of railway engines passing to and fro. As a rather priggish old schoolmaster, I always wonder, in my stuffy way, why these young persons are not in school and getting abreast of surds and isosceles triangles and the dates of the English kings, but I tell myself that perhaps it is a half hol. And by rather a fluke I too was one day caught up in the general railway enthusiasm. Arriving one morning at Paddington to board a diesel for the sunny southwest, I found a scene of unparalleled excitement, the station positively jammed with people and happy faces and cameras on every side. And there, resplendent and gleaming, stood a steam engine, the superb King George V, ready to make a celebratory run to Bristol. It set off, to loud cheers and wet eyes all round, before we did but our diesel caught it up and passed it near Slough (it looked extraordinarily small and toy-like) and from then on, and waiting for it, every bridge was crowded with people and hardly a yard of the track side was without an onlooker. The engine later broke down, sad to say, at, I think, Swindon, but it had been a great and nostalgic day all the same. And it is to steam trains that we shall be, and far sooner than is thought, eventually returning, so totally lunatic is the squandering of liquid fossil fuel products (just think of the quantity of petrol that those deeply unattractive motor-races manage to get rid of in an afternoon in order to create noise and smells and, quite often, death).

And now Philip Unwin, a railway and steam enthusiast if ever I saw one, has produced a delightful book, *Travelling by Train in the Edwardian Era* (Allen & Unwin, £4.50) which wafts us back to the days when a private saloon carriage could be booked and when Professor Moriarty or other wrong-doer could, hot for Holmes, hire a special train at what seemed five minutes' notice and go flying down the rails in pursuit at 7s. 6d, or 37½p, a mile (minimum charge £5, the same as for a frivolous tug on the communication cord). Although I missed the Edwardian era by precisely four days, railways didn't change all that much for a number of years and several of Mr Unwin's admirable illustrations pluck charming chords from memory's strings – Surbiton station with the morning commuter rush just over, the West of England express thundering along the very pretty Salisbury to Exeter line (now a mere single track, if you please), a GWR slip coach which excitingly unhooked itself from the express and came gliding silently into Reading, a group snap of the station staff of Sandown, Isle of Wight (24 of them in all, boots brightly gleaming), the contents of the Paddington mail train being briskly sorted in the night hours (over 40 people hard at work and setting a fine example to some current Post Office employees who don't seem to be able to manage much over the weekends), and a sensational gathering of rolling stock at Caernarvon on the occasion of the Prince of Wales' investiture in 1911. In those days a big electric bell on the outside wall of the waiting room alerted those waiting within to the fact that the train had 'entered section', as we of the iron way phrase it, and that it was time to gather up their wicker-work hand-luggage, travelling rugs and smelling-salts and head for the platform.

I have never understood whether, in railway lavatories, the crisp notice GENTLEMEN RAISE THE SEAT is a statement or an injunction. Either way it considerably limits the range of male activity within. Be that as it may, how thrilling it was in the old days (it doesn't seem to happen any more) that sudden peep down at the permanent way flashing past so speedily just below one. Mr Unwin, ever one to come up with an interesting and picturesque fact, tells us that some of the most realistic of railway track noises were recently made by lowering the microphone down the lavatory pan. He is also expert on the assorted noises of the rail joints – 'Da-da-dum, da-da-dum' they went when there were rails of 45-foot length, changing to 'Duddly-duddly-duddly' on the older 30-foot rails. And who who heard it could ever forget the slow 'I think-I-can, I think-I-can' noise of a steam engine labouring up a stiff incline, followed by the pleased 'Thought-I-could, thought-I-could' sound as it flew down the other side? It is easy to think that all travel methods are nowadays 'better'. Not better at all. Just different.

Roger Woddis

Blood on the tea

A report by the World Development Movement claims that British tea companies are continuing, despite recent pledges, to exploit tea pickers.

I'm shocked and disgusted
To think that I trusted
The Co-op and Brooke Bond
To lighten their toil.
The charge is plain-spoken:
The promise is broken,
There's blood on the tea,
And my own's on the boil.

It pains me to say it,
The way they portray it,
The picture is one
That I'd rather not see.
The companies were lying,
The young are still dying;
I'm sick when I think
Of the profits from tea.

What use are petitions
To end these conditions?
The firms should be fined,
And the shareholders shot.
It's all so upsetting,
I'm shaking and sweating –
Oh, is there another one
Left in the pot?

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Blake Morrison

Out from the Shoal

Field Work by SEAMUS HEANEY *Faber* £3.00 & £1.65

Seamus Heaney's new collection really begins with 'Exposure', the last poem from *North*, where he dramatises himself wandering meditatively through the wet Wicklow countryside, 'a wood-kerne/Escaped from the massacre'. The move out of Ulster into the Republic, and the mixed feelings – both guilt and relief – which accompanied it, are not often explicitly mentioned in *Field Work*; but they are there. Heaney spent his first 33 years in the North, nearly half of them in Belfast, and it was there in the late 1960s that he began to develop an authoritative voice with which to speak about Ireland and its past. His sense of living through a historical crisis made Heaney a more obviously 'political' writer than before; and his fascination with the Bog People, whose sacrificial society he compared to present-day Ulster, gave him a framework with which to interpret current events. By the early 1970s Heaney was being called a public poet to compare with Yeats. But then . . .

> Then I landed in the hedge-school of Glanmore
> And from the backs of ditches hoped to raise
> A voice caught back off slug-horn and
> slow chanter
> That might continue, hold, dispel, appease:
> Vowels ploughed into other, opened ground,
> Each verse returning like the plough
> turned round.

There's a certain amount of twinkling-eyed self-irony in that first line. Heaney knows, and we know, that to live in and write about the countryside need not be a retreat: the Glanmore hedge-school is not to be confused with the Georgian nature-school. Nor has his public mantle altogether been discarded: to 'continue, hold, dispel, appease' is still the intention, and in *Field Work* there continue to be poems about Northern Ireland, one at least openly resentful of the presence of British troops 'approaching down my roads /As if they owned them'. But it would be foolish to pretend that *Field Work* has anything like the scope or ambition of *North*: its topography is much more restricted (ordnance survey scale), its time-scale diminished, its tone far less urgent. 'The end of art is peace', Heaney ventures in one poem here, as if still wanting his poetry to make something happen. But what kind of peace and for whom? In *North* Heaney seemed to be speaking to and for the Catholic population in Ulster and, despite his fatalism, to be offering succour and relief. The peace which he works for here is different – that offered to both poet and reader at the end of a satisfying work of art.

Why should these two kinds of peace – social and aesthetic – be incompatible? No reason. But it is standard doctrine in British and American poetry of this century that they are. Either one commits oneself to a public, socially concerned poetry and produces inferior art, or one withdraws into solitude and gives oneself a chance of greatness: that is the ideology, and Heaney in *Field Work* adds his weight to it. In 'Casualty' he explores the implications of one of the most haunting deaths during the Troubles – that of an acquaintance who, defying a curfew imposed by Catholics in mourning for the 13 men shot by British paratroopers in Derry, was 'blown to bits' while out for his customary evening's drinking: the bomb had been planted by his own people. When in *North* Heaney explored similar ritual punishments – the putting to death of an adulteress by the Bog People, the tarring-and-feathering of Ulster girls who went out with British soldiers – his sympathies were balanced between pity for the women and understanding of the tribe's 'exact' and 'intimate' revenge. Here there is the same impression of earnest reflection on a difficult moral problem – 'How culpable was he,' Heaney asks, 'That last night when he broke/Our tribe's complicity?' – but the imagery of the poem tips the balance so as to exculpate the dead man. A fisherman by day, he moved by night like a fish to 'the lure/Of warm lit-up places'; being a loner by instinct,

he could not help but defy the laws of his people. Nor, Heaney hints, can the poet:

> . . . you find a rhythm
> Working you, slow mile by mile,
> Into your proper haunt
> Somewhere, well out, beyond . . .

It is a mark of Heaney's 'tentative art' that in this poem and 'The Badgers' consideration of the problems of loyalty and responsibility should take the form of questions and shy hints rather than of open declarations. But there can be no doubt that Heaney's thinking these days is pushing towards a conventional Romantic view of the poet as someone whose pursuit of art places him beyond the demands of the tribe. An earlier version of 'Casualty' put the matter more blatantly:

> Sometimes men obtain
> A power when they betray
> And swim out from the shoal,
> Daring to make free.

Heaney's cancellation of these lines suggests that he is still tugged by old currents of feeling, still worried about the cost of artistic freedom. This tension is expressed in *Field Work* through the recurrent image of the circle. On the one hand the circle symbolises artistic perfection – the sort of perfection to be found in Heaney's own 'Glanmore Sonnets', where every last line completes themes taken up in the first, 'each verse returning like the plough turned round'. On the other hand circles can symbolise confinement and artistic self-enclosure. The pattern of Heaney's imagery suggests that it is crucial to find the correct balance. Poets who pursue artistic perfection to the neglect of their family and tribe are likely to find themselves being wished into hell – as Heaney is, amusingly, in 'An Afterwards', where his long-suffering wife is described wanting 'to plunge all poets in the ninth circle'. But to allow one's art to be violated by politics is equally a crime punishable by damnation: in the excellent 'Leavings', this is the fate of that desecrator Thomas Cromwell – 'which circle does he tread . . .?', Heaney wonders.

Dante's are the most infernal circles of all, and Heaney has lately been reading his Dante. The last poem in *Field Work* is a translation from books xxxii and xxxiii of the *Inferno*, where Ugolino is seen gnawing the head and brains of Archbishop Roger – a powerful evocation of two parties (England and Ireland?) locked in a perpetual, bitter relationship. Dorothy Sayers's competent

> O Pisa! scandal of all folk whose tongue
> In our fair country speaks the sound of *si*

becomes a piece of marvellous Heaneyese:

> Pisa! Pisa, your sounds are like a hiss
> Sizzling in our country's grassy language.

What makes that distinctively Heaney's is the loving repetition of 'Pisa! Pisa', and the feeling, in 'grassy', that language is not just code or construct but a palpable, sensuous, living thing. The saying aloud of names has been a feature of Heaney's poetry since *Wintering Out*, and here again in this volume is always a prelude to some powerful evocation of place: 'When they said *Carrickfergus* I could hear/ the frosty echo of saltminers' picks', 'Dogger, Rockall, Malin, Irish Sea:/Green, swift upsurges, North Atlantic flux'.

Heaney has spoken admirably of Patrick Kavanagh and of the way that naming and listing in his poetry is a kind of 'love-act'. Heaney has learnt from Kavanagh. The restorative power of at least one poem here comes from the simple mention of 'Three tight green cabbages, and carrots/With the tops and mould still fresh on them': literal detail as love. But he has also discovered over the years the tenderness in comparison: metaphor as love. In *Field Work* we have oyster shells like 'bivalves', 'a rowan like a lipsticked girl', and elderberry flowers becoming 'a swart caviar of shot,/A buoyant spawn'. Heaney's work is now balanced between metaphor and metonymy. The love poems to his wife depend for their authenticity of feeling both on careful attention to small detail ('the vaccination mark /stretched on your upper arm'), and on daring use of extended metaphor. In one poem she is compared to an otter. In another, more riskily, her posture during a 'head-down, tail-up hunt in a bottom

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drawer' reminds him of a skunk: it's not a comparison that most women would survive, but Marie emerges here as lovable and loved, 'stained to perfection'.

There is enough in these poems of love and landscape to make one feel that Heaney's decision to work within a smaller, more private area of experience is correct. As the opening poem, 'Oysters', implies, there is a new freedom in *Field Work*, a desire to trust in 'light' (pure inspiration) and to move away from the nagging historical realities of empire and exploitation. But this is freedom at a price. In 'The Guttural Muse' Heaney writes enviously of

> the slimy tench
> Once called the 'doctor fish' because his slime
> Was said to heal the wounds of fish that
> touched it.

Heaney might still like to be that tench – healing and helping. But the role he occupies in *Field Work* is rather that of anointer, his gifts offered to the dead rather than the living. This is how he appears, movingly, in 'The Strand at Lough Beg', 'gathering up cold handfuls of the dew' in order to wash the corpse of Colum McCartney. And if not anointing, Heaney is trying, poignantly but hopelessly, to resurrect: 'Get up from your blood on the floor' he orders Sean Armstrong. All that's left to him, it seems, is to give the dead a decent burial; that is why the dominant note in this collection is elegiac. There are some fine burials, too: Robert Lowell will not receive a better tribute than Heaney's 'Elegy'.

There is much to admire in *Field Work*, then. But it's hard to ignore the direction which Heaney seems to be taking; and precisely because he is so important, it's hard not to regret it. No one's love and insight are more precious than his: let him never forget how much we all of us need them.

Alan Brownjohn

A Bad Cat Poem

In the spring of their hope you saw
them crouching,
He outside in the sunshine and she inside,
And handling this bad cat back and forth,
to and fro
Through the flap. And back through the flap.
They were trying to coax it to work the flap.

That summer the cat was not learning at all,
Though they pushed it persistently, head
First and tail last, towards each other
Through the yielding flap in the humid dark,
She inside, he outside, with fists full of
moulted hairs.

And by the autumn still it had not learnt,
While the air was not kindly any more:
The flap on its hinges grated, he outside
Forcing hard the reluctant brute to her inside,
Receiving it with aching hands.

It had to be winter next; it would not
learn now.
It had never made it once of its own accord,
It had only ever let itself passively
Be jostled to and fro through the
grinding hole,
To and fro, back and forth, she inside,
he outside,

And both of them getting horribly impatient.

John Arden

Private and Public Passion

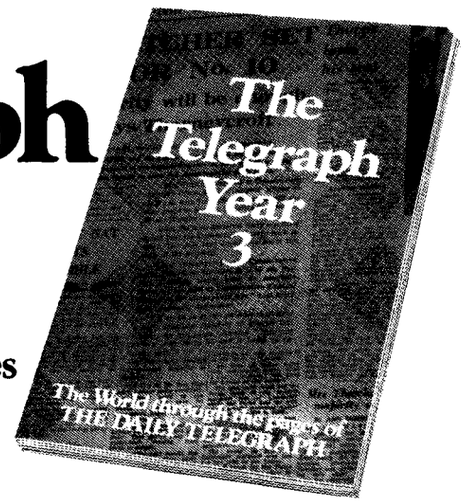
I Love. The Story of Vladimir Mayakovsky & Lili Brik by ANN & SAMUEL CHARTERS *Deutsch* £8.95

Catullus/Lesbia: Curithir/Liadan: Dante/Beatrice: Keats/Fanny Brawne . . . Obsessive love – combining (or contrasting) sexual with spiritual passion, confusing possessiveness with self-denial and devotion to the beloved with narcissist self-exaltation, mingling sadist and masochist pain in what is hopelessly hoped to be a mutual gratification – has been sought as a theme for poetry almost since poetry was invented, if indeed it was not the very cause of its invention. The theme has been sought not only by the poets themselves but by biographers, who, unwilling to take the precision of the poetry on trust, feel compelled to rummage until they find a 'real person' to whom the ecstatic texts can be applied. The real person, when discovered, turns out of course to be just a person. All we know of him/her to make her/him spectacular in the history of the human race in what the poet has felt and stated. Your precellent bedfellow is my bad-tempered neighbour . . . In the poem, though, by what is strictly a *fictional* technique, we meet not a person but a transfigured divinity and thus become sharers in the poet's recorded adoration for as long as the poem lasts.

One of the earliest known of such poets was Sappho, and the interesting thing about her is that she was writing in the shadow and with full awareness of the far from personal works of both Homer and Hesiod. In her semi-literate society private and public verse were presumably addressed to quite different kinds of audience – one or two friends quietly listening in a room as opposed to a civic assembly harangued by a rhapsodist. The invention of printing made things much more difficult. To publish one's most secret passions to thousands all at the one time is really a very odd thing to do: but a work earnestly reflecting on the state of popular liberties would surely require to be offered to the public at large and simultaneously. Mayakovsky tried both and indeed within the same poems: and in a period of the acutest political crisis: I would guess it was this contradiction that did more than anything to cause his suicide.

His recurrent mistress Lili Brik (they both had many other lovers over some 15 years – and, we are told, she never achieved complete physical fulfilment with him) was also the wife of his publisher, who as theorist and critic of Poetry-in-the-service-of-Revolution was also the man who, with Mayakovsky, had 'come close to grasping political power in cultural matters'. Somewhere in the background Trotsky was exiled and the foundations for the purge-trials were being pegged out. To discover the 'reality' of this undoubted grand passion, Mrs Charters went to Moscow and interviewed the septuagenarian Lili. And dis-

The Telegraph Year 3



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covered – just a person, and rather an opaque person, at that. How far the old lady's memories were distorted by the lapse of time or the shifts of politics (Lili too had been an active theorist) we cannot tell. But the resulting book does seem to reduce rather than reinforce the emotional impact of the poems.

Did she keep something back? Were certain questions not pressed? We are told she was a versatile artist in her own right: but we are given no criteria by which to assess her work. We are told that Pasternak was wary of the Briks because they were too close to the secret police, that their 'relationship with their friends in government was so strong that they could intercede for people who had been arrested'. Though they didn't, at least not always . . . And with what the authors indeed call Lili's 'heartless remark' that 'conditions in the camps were good', the subject is hastily dropped. (Year 1926 – *Stalinus ascendens* . . .) We are told that she was neglected by the post-Stalin literary establishment. Because of the 'immorality' of her liaison with the famous poet – or were some of them still wary?

The trouble seems to lie in the nationality and experience of the authors. They are Americans, devoted principally to American biography and poetry. They admit to have started out to write a short lyrical love-story which then became more complicated. And how could it not? The task faced by the Russian Communist writers of the 1920s who tried perforce to re-design pre-revolutionary poetic structures to bear the thematic weight of proletarian revolution was enormous and intimidating. Even without Stalin it portended nervous breakdowns and suicides. And the dilemmas are still not resolved today. The revolution in Russia was a fact: to westerners it is still a theoretical prospect. We have not shared Mayakovsky's public experience or anything like it. The private passions that accompanied and entangled it cannot therefore be approached through a western romanticism based largely upon Sappho with neither Homer nor Hesiod to correct the imbalance.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Roger Riddell

Good Old Smitty

The Past is Another Country: Rhodesia 1890-1979 by MARTIN MEREDITH *Deutsch* £9.95.

Until he was installed as Prime Minister on 13 April 1964, few people outside politics had even heard of him. 'He displayed no obvious talent or flair; he was a dull speaker with a limited vocabulary; his contribution as a Member of Parliament for 16 years had been insignificant', writes Martin Meredith. When Smith first met Henry Kissinger in Pretoria in 1976, the Secretary of State told him 'your reputation as a devious and lying twister is even worse than mine'.

In *The past is another country: Rhodesia 1890-1979*, Martin Meredith, the Rhodesia correspondent first for *The Observer* and then *The Sunday Times*, records the history of Rhodesia's constitutional dispute with Britain from UDI to the installation of Bishop Muzorewa as Prime Minister on 1 June this year. Although the title suggests that we are to be guided through the whole history of colonial Rhodesia, only 24 pages out of 370 cover the first 70 years of colonial rule. Mr. Meredith's prime purpose appears to be to analyse the character and political career of Ian Smith who 'became the object of a personality cult of proportions rarely rivalled outside totalitarian regimes'.

As a record of Smith's place in Rhodesian and later world contemporary history, it is a perceptive and at times exciting story. Other actors come under the spotlight: Wilson, Goodman, Pearce, Vorster, Kaunda, Richard, Nkomo, Sithole, Mugabe and Muzorewa. The story is familiar to anyone who has followed it in the press and in other books written about the period such as Lord Blake's *A History of Rhodesia* or, more recently, Paul Moorcroft's *A Short Thousand Years*. Meredith is at his best and most original when revealing the conflicts and tensions within Smith's Rhodesian Front party, especially in the closed sessions of the party.

At one level, Smith holds no mysteries. He has always stood for white minority rule and has vigorously pursued policies to maintain white supremacy. Even when last year he had to concede to a black majority in parliament, he did so

> 'because he was confident that . . . the administration, the security forces and the economy (would be maintained) under white influence and control. Majority rule to him meant simply a parliamentary rearrangement; the blacks would be given a majority in Parliament but be deprived of power to interfere with constitutional provisions safeguarding white interests'.

Meredith clearly shows Britain's almost blind refusal to believe this; never during the whole history of UDI was Britain committed to positive action to end the rebellion.

But at another level, Smith did appear a mystery: a characteristic which initially endeared him to the whites – 'good old Smitty' – but which eventually led to serious rumblings at the heart of the party machine. Part of the mystery lay in Smith's personality. But more importantly, it was caused by his obsession for secretiveness and his increasing unwillingness to inform even close colleagues that for the survival of the white race, change was inevitable. It was this secretiveness which infuriated his allies at home and abroad and led to the eventual resignation of the

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Rhodesian Front chairman, Des Frost, calling Smith 'a tired and negative prime minister, bankrupt of ideas'.

As a comprehensive account of colonial Rhodesia or even of its dying days, however, *The past is another country* falls far short of expectations. The bulk of the book is taken up with reporting political events in the post-UDI period. There is little analysis. Meredith appears unwilling to make judgements to place the events he records in a broader context. For example, in discussing the recent election in Rhodesia, he lists the arguments of different observers about the conduct of the election, but did he, as an observer, think the election was free and fair?

Outside the field of politics there are major weaknesses. To begin with, there are a large number of factual errors.

Of more importance is the absence of analysis of the economy and the failure to appreciate the continuity of black resistance to white rule after the 1896-7 rebellions. To argue, for example, and to state that for 'more than half a century, the African population accepted white rule passively, showing little sign of resentment about the discriminatory system built up to contain them' is to accept uncritically the white conventional wisdom of Rhodesian blacks – a myth which one thought had been laid to rest by Rhodesian historians such as Van Onselen, Phimister and McKenzie. Talk to Africans who worked in the mines in the 1920s and 1930s, who farmed in the 1930s or who were the victims of cattle destocking in the 1940s and a very different picture will emerge.

Finally, for the past seven years, Rhodesia has been fighting two escalating and interrelated wars: the military war of the gun and the propaganda war of words. The security forces regularly use napalm and phosphorous grenades; special units such as the Selous Scouts impersonate guerrillas and have been accused, with some evidence, of killing both civilians and missionaries. For a time there was one complete French mercenary unit, with the *tri-couleur* attached to its uniforms, ravaging the countryside.

The Rhodesian press is subject to rigorous censorship and in practice the media is under the complete control of the government. Black newspapers such as *The Zimbabwe Times*, *Moto* and *Mambo* have all been banned. Scores of foreign journalists, many of them British, have been thrown out of the country.

Although the present book has been written by a journalist, it remains almost completely silent on most of these issues. If a journalist lives and works in the atmosphere of such comprehensive propaganda, does he not have an obligation to both his newspaper and his fellow journalists to discuss the issue subsequently?

When I was last in Rhodesia two years ago, there was not one black I met who had not had a relative killed or tortured in the war. In London, I have met young whites, some scarcely 20 years old, who have been directly involved in mass shootings of civilians including small children. Their hands permanently shake, they no longer have a full night's sleep – they are psychological wrecks. The scars of the past few years run deep and will be remembered for years to come.

Is the past really another country? The full story of colonial Rhodesia has still to be written.

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Tim Shallice

Terminal Experiments

J. B. Watson: The Founder of Behaviourism
by DAVID COHEN *Routledge* £8.95
The Search for the 'Manchurian Candidate'
by JOHN MARKS *Allen Lane* £5.50

'Perhaps the most important book ever written. One stands for an instant blinded by a great hope.' So wrote the reviewer in the New York newspaper *Tribune* of J. B. Watson's book *Behaviourism*. Even Bertrand Russell considered that Watson had made the greatest contribution to psychology since Aristotle. Indeed Watson's impact on academic psychology appears enormous. From 1870 to 1910 in style and subject matter psychology was an off-shoot of philosophy. From 1920 to 1960 it was dominated by single-minded studies of the behaviour of the laboratory rat. More than any other person, Watson was responsible for the transformation.

Cohen's book is a very readable account of his life, which is undoubtedly of some interest. Yet behaviourism is now academically virtually dead, so the main interest of Watson is why his ideas were so popular at the time. Cohen explains their direct origin in the controversies over consciousness in animals at the turn of the century, but much less thoroughly than Brian Mackenzie in his 1977 book. But Cohen, like Mackenzie, has virtually nothing to say about the crucial question of why his ideas, when applied to people, had the impact they did. Watson made no major discoveries. He developed no adequately supported theory of any interest. Many of his central ideas now seem bizarrely counter-intuitive and unsupported by evidence – that thoughts are minute movements of the larynx, that humans are simple stimulus-response machines, that the use of mental concepts is no better than the use of religious ones.

It now seems most unlikely that any adequate theory of mind could have been developed before the advent of complex computer systems. If this was indeed impossible, any major change of psychology paradigm before needs to be understood primarily as ideology. Cohen gets nearest to an explanation of the success of Watson's views in 'The temper of the times was to be practical. Watson's manifesto [sic] offered the possibility of a psychology that would be practical as well as scientific.' Watson was indeed part of a social movement. The first decade of the century was a time of great expansion for American capitalism, the era of the entrepreneur: American psychology was to be part of it. 'The psychological experiment is to be placed at the service of commence and industry,' wrote Munsterberg, the first experimental psychologist at Harvard, in 1913. In 1920 a number of even more eminent psychologists founded a joint stock company, the Psychological Corporation, to make psychological skills available to industry. Behaviourism, 'the science of prediction and control of human behaviour', was an ideal ideological basis for these types of application; it became the intellectual fad of the 1920s in America. Indeed its central concept 'habit' – now of little interest to human psychologists – fits beautifully with the work discipline requirements of a society undergoing rapid industrialisation.

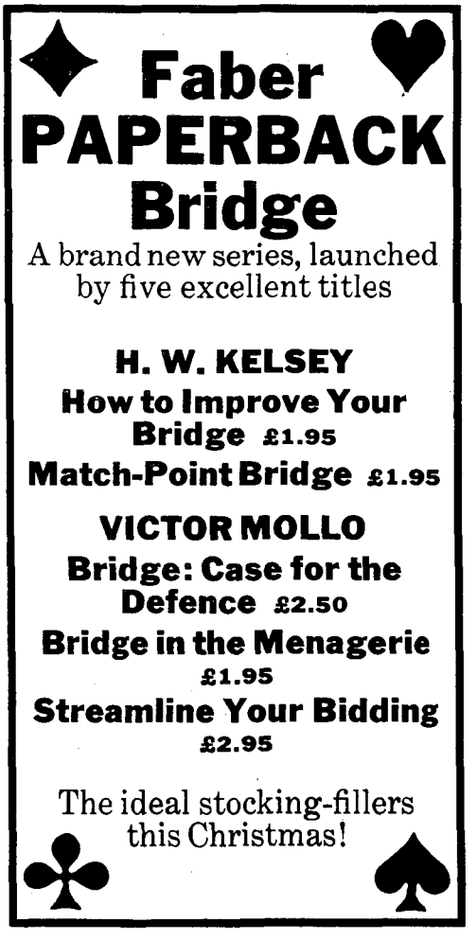
Watson, himself, was clear about the use of behaviourism for social control. Forced out of academic life in a divorce scandal in 1920, he joined J. Walter Thompson. Cohen makes a strong case that he was primarily responsible for the invention of the Hidden Persuaders approach in advertising. By 1930 he had created a second revolution in his new 'field'. This had an added advantage that it was worth $70,000 a year to him!

Behaviourism failed as a scientific method. Yet its philosophical core of the 'behavioural sciences' as instruments of social control survived and prospered. Very directly it was the basis of the utopian illusions of Skinner's *Walden II*. Much less direct in intellectual line of descent, but much more real is the grim way 'behavioural science' has been used in the service of modern American capitalism. We are just beginning to find out how much a number of American 'behavioural sciences' were controlled by the military and CIA. Marks's book is an investigative journalist's account of a sensational episode. The product of his Freedom of Information Act suit against the CIA, it describes their research programme for developing methods for many types of social control purposes.

The title reflects perhaps the most amazing of these purposes – the scientific programme to produce an assassin who would not remember. The idea of the famous film was not (just?) a fantasy of its author, but a multi-million dollar research programme, co-ordinated by the CIA. Of course, in the post-Orwellian 1950s people in the West knew that such an enterprise could only be being conducted by the Russians and Chinese. It was in fact being conducted by the CIA and according to Marks probably by them alone.

For this purpose and, in addition, to create means of breaking potential enemy agents or of making political opponents appear mad, the CIA tried various combinations of hypnosis, ECT, sensory deprivation, LSD and other chemicals and even considered leucotomies. Their organisational methods were as subtle as their scientific methods were gross. Relatively mild procedures were initially employed by university researchers funded by CIA money as typical psychology experiments on student subjects – the origin of LSD as a social drug! But experiments on student subjects do not mimic 'real life' conditions. These require so-called 'terminal experiments' on non-volunteers – prisoners, psychiatric patients, black drug addicts and those on the fringe of the spy world. Seventy-seven straight days on LSD for heroin addicts at an Addiction Centre; sixty-five days of induced sleep with ECT two to three times a day, sometimes preceded by a month of sensory deprivation, for schizophrenic patients. In addition, to facilitate the study of blackmail, they set up brothels. At the other extreme they set up a 'respectable' academic funding agency to channel money to academics for many CIA purposes – for both soft and terminal experiments, for cover for agents abroad, to obtain experts as consultants, to be able to approach already indebted individuals for specific assistance. The purpose of the academics was, of course, often very different. Yet those who 'benefited', including Presidents of the American Associations of psychology, psychiatry and neurology, not to mention Rogers, Skinner, Goffman and Eysenck, were either in the know or over-ambitious suckers. From now on ignorance cannot be an acceptable defence for academics.

Marks's valuable book is concerned solely with the CIA which the media tend to treat as a maverick exception. But is it? The funding of scores of academic conferences is now undertaken by NATO. Lots of research workers go in the belief their research has no 'dirty' military significance. One wonders what Piaget and Margaret Mead thought when they attended CIA-controlled conferences on 'Problems of Consciousness' or the like in the 1950s. What could be less applied than that? To take a much more obvious example, the training of assassins is now being perfected by the US Navy. Nor is the issue just American. Sensory deprivation research was initiated by the Canadian Defence Department. Moreover, a three nation secret conference in 1951 concluded that 'Behaviour-control methods' [sic] must be researched for 'cold war operations'. The third nation was Britain. A reading of the 1971 official Parker Report on sensory deprivation torture (known in Newspeak as 'depth interrogation') in Northern Ireland makes it obvious that there has been a research programme here too. But without a British Watergate we are not very likely to hear about it. Worse still, as real advances are actually beginning to be made for the first time ever in psychology, given the present world political situation we can expect the rapid expansion in the technology of political control.



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Kevin Brownlow

Real Men

John Ford by ANDREW SINCLAIR *Allen & Unwin* £7.50
John Huston by AXEL MADSEN *Robson Books* £5.95

A biography of John Ford, by an Englishman! The old Irish reprobate must be turning in his grave. Yet I suspect that Ford, who loved mystery and legend, would thoroughly approve of Andrew Sinclair's book. For the legends are uncritically upheld, and Ford comes across as a swashbuckling movie director, Irish rebel and American spy. An event which has long been whispered about (Ford did most of the whispering) concerns his journey to Ireland during the Troubles to support the IRA.

Sinclair says that in the summer of 1921, 'when the Sinn Fein and the IRA were fighting the British Army', Ford mysteriously disappeared for six months 'in pursuit of Irish freedom'. But what was he doing? The Truce came into force on July 11, 1921 and by December the British Army was moving out. Sinclair might have checked passenger lists, hotel visitors' books, passport records to ascertain whether Ford abandoned his family to visit Ireland, or just abandoned his family. Ford's widow is non-committal: 'I never asked him about it,' she told Sinclair. 'It was a sore subject, very secret, and I don't know the difference between the IRA and my ABC.' So many questions are raised by this short section that it should either have been greatly expanded or dropped altogether.

Later in his life, Ford tried to live the legend he'd created about himself. And when this happens, Sinclair's book comes into its own. The section on Ford's career in the second world war is completely fresh to me – and if even half of it is accurate, it's amazing. In 1942, the Americans knew precisely when the Midway Islands would be attacked. Ford, a Navy reservist, flew there and was ready for the battle with a 16mm camera. And there's no argument about this; the film survives and Ford was awarded a Purple Heart (he was wounded in the arm), the Air Medal and a Special Oscar.

Ford's link with the military is a strong theme in the book. His link with the extreme right – Goldwater, Nixon – dismayed many of those who loved his films. Sinclair tries to make a case for Ford as a liberal, but there is too much energetic remoulding of the old man's character for such a claim to ring true. Ford was intensely contradictory; the man who formed a club with the slogan 'No Jews, no dues' also made *The Grapes of Wrath*. For all his admirable qualities, he was, to use his own term, a sonofabitch. He treated even his closest friends with a sadism which bordered on the psychopathic. And yet, although their loyalty wavered from time to time, they loved him.

Ford's use of humiliation as a directorial device is hardly admirable; Frank Borzage got similar results through charm and kindness. But Ford happens to be perhaps America's greatest director. What I would like to know is how this remarkable man's character, as a film-maker, developed.

Sinclair provides some intriguing information about his early days, but his coverage of the silent era is both negligible and inaccurate. This is a drawback in a book about a director who declared 'I am a man of the silent cinema' – and who made around 50 silent films. And one vital chapter in Ford's life is missing – his connection with his older brother Francis. An actor, and a pioneer director, Francis Ford made a number of outstanding westerns for Thomas H. Ince. These little pictures were authentic, often sympathetic to the Indian, often concerned with the details of military life on the frontier. Familiar? Francis Ford was fascinated by many of the things that later animated his brother. Yet his career plummeted. By the 1920s, he was among the most hopeless directors in the business, and he ended up playing bits in his brother's films – invariably drunks. There was great rivalry between the two men and, apparently, intense dislike. Why? Sinclair merely refers to 'some antagonism'. But he gives not the slightest hint of Francis's importance; I hope he will make amends in future editions.

Sinclair may not have had time to research this book as thoroughly as some of his others (Ford did *not* make a film for the British Film Institute – that information was put out as a hoax) but his heart is in the right place. His book is an admiring and affectionate portrait, and he often produces an enchanting nugget which offsets any number of deficiencies – rather like the old man himself:

> While he was filming *The Rising of the Moon* in Ireland, a small Irishman approached him. 'Y'know,' he said, 'I wouldn't go about it this way at all. Now if I was to make a fillum, I'd have men in red coats riding their fine horses and I'd have women in those fancy costumes. This isn't anything at all, but what you might see anyplace'

As Sinclair says, he paid Ford a fine compliment.

John Huston is another Hollywood film director – part-Irish, and recently an Irish citizen – who regards film-making as an adventure. Huston's 'adventures' have often been grim enough to make his victims want to shoot him. Gregory Peck, on *Moby Dick*, decided he was a real-life Captain Ahab 'It's a mistake,' he said 'to tell John that something is impossible.'

Like Sinclair, Axel Madsen takes the stories on trust, but he doesn't even bother with source notes. The book is aimed at the popular market. Madsen has been a journalist in Hollywood, and the book has a gossipy, boisterous quality about it, as though he's making sure he has a good time, too. It is a surprisingly slim volume for so eventful a life. Huston's father was the actor, Walter Huston. His parents split up when John was three, and his childhood was divided between his mother – who loved gambling – and his father, who travelled all over the United States with vaudeville companies. Huston has never ceased to travel (or gamble), and he has made his films all over the world. But once again, there is a lack of information about his development as a film-maker, and about the film-makers who influenced him.

Like John Ford, Huston was deeply involved in the second world war. He made one of the most astonishing, and moving, documentaries of the entire war, *The Battle of San Pietro*. Madsen writes about the film efficiently enough, yet one longs for *more*; he also provides details of Huston's famous, but seldom seen, documentary *Let There Be*

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Light, dealing with the mental injuries sustained by combat troops. Following the style of the David Niven books, he devotes as much space to the next incident – a joke about a whorehouse – as he does to this extraordinary film. Madsen's book is designed to be enjoyed in a series of gulps, like Irish whisky, and in this it succeeds. (It does, however, have its share of factual backfires. The author of *Beat the Devil* is named as one 'James Helvick' – long since unmasked as Claud Cockburn, who recounts his meeting with Huston in *I Claud.)*

Whatever he may make in the future, Huston will be remembered for a magnificent group of films – *Maltese Falcon, Treasure of Sierra Madre, Asphalt Jungle.* He is, with Buñuel, the oldest director still at work. 'what is almost unique in Huston's case,' says Madsen, 'is that in his seventies, he can still charm the moneymen into betting on his talents.' Huston's philosophy is one that links almost all traditional film-makers; 'What you try to become is a bringer of magic,' he says. 'For magic and truth are closely allied and movies are sheer magic. When they are misused, it's a debasement of magic. But when they work, it's – well, it's glorious.'

Helen McNeil

Can't Have Both

The Ghost Writer by PHILIP ROTH *Cape* £4.95

What if there had been a Jewish version of Henry James? In this marvellously controlled ironic novella, Philip Roth has invented a bristlingly vivid Jewish James called E.I. Lonoff, a selfless patriarch of 'sympathy and pitilessness'. Then he unleashes a disciple on Lonoff, a young Jewish and rather Rothian writer who is comically eager to learn the lesson of the master. After a day of observing the 'terminal restraint' that passes for life in the Lonoff dacha in the Berkshire mountains of Massachusetts, young Nathan Zuckerman has learned a different lesson from the one he set out to get: one man's 'madness of art' is another man's poison.

In Henry James, the 'madness of art' must sponge out the bright colours of mere life. James's lesson is brutally clear: a man must choose either life or art, he can't have both. Roth, however, brilliantly revises James's lesson: according to the *Ghost Writer* the master and his lesson don't quite match. The son was born to make a ghost of his father. While the *Ghost Writer* stands figuratively on the shoulders of Henry James, one of its wittiest insights occurs when its nosey young hero stands literally on a volume of James so he can overhear the live-action Aspern papers of Lonoff's love life upstairs. The literary voyeur Nathan should have learned the lesson offered by his own experiences earlier in the evening: his inability to write a letter to his real father, his joyless masturbation on the master's daybed, and the intoxication when he reads 'The Middle Years', James's story of a destructive discipleship. All Nathan hears, of course, is a self-parodic renunciation scene as the master refuses to kiss the breasts of his presumed mistress, the pretty refugee Amy Bellette.

Roth's mercilessly compact plot shows that young Nathan will never achieve the moral and artistic scrupulousness of his literary father. At the same time, however, Roth's serene, cool, utterly assured style tells us that he, at least, has found his way through to the calm power of a novelist's 'middle years'. In *The Ghost Writer* he tries on a Jamesian Jewish mask as 'the Jew who got away', standing back from the ironies of life. The mask fits elegantly.

All along Roth's fiction, like the life-styles of his heroes, has been about performance. *The Ghost Writer* is a novel about performance too, since it is another public acting out of Roth's major theme of broken inheritance but it plays upon its theme by a marked absence of colourful gestures. Nathan Zuckerman has already appeared in *My Life As A Man* as one of Roth's writer-professor-performers. In that novel Nathan's father owned Mr Z Shoe Stores, and Nathan aspired to genteel and gentile respectability through the New Criticism while purporting to court a nice Jewish girl whose remarkable sexual performances were inspired by her hatred of her own merchant father, Al 'the Zipper King' Shatsky. Even when Roth pleasured us most with his character's antics, his slangy jumping prose was making asses of them all – especially the great pretender Nathan. In the glass of Roth's satire we were always assured of seeing a reflected face that was not our own.

In *The Ghost Writer* the world of the fathers still bounces with satiric excess but Roth's cool style also conveys the extended trauma of a son's love for his father. What is the lesson of realising that you love someone whom you can please only by destroying yourself?

> And what I saw when I looked out to wave goodbye for the winter, was my smallish smartly dressed father – turned out for my visit in a new 'fingertip' car coat . . . ; what I saw was my bewildered father, alone on the darkening street-corner by the park that used to be our paradise, thinking himself and all of Jewry disgraced and jeopardised by my inexplicable betrayal.

When a Roth novel is being muted it still has more chutzpah than two novels by anyone else. Roth asks us to remember that young Nathan has only pursued Lonoff because he couldn't get a reaction from his first mentor Felix Abravanel, the Saul Bellow – Norman Mailer model of the Jewish actor as performer. In the heart of Lonoff's ascetic retreat Nathan fantasizes his own future performances. What if he could have a sexy, intellectual soul-mate and silence his heritage-happy parents in one blow? What if attractive, enigmatic Amy Bellette was really Anne Frank? 'Anne, says my father – *the* Anne? Oh, how I have misunderstood my son.' The fantasy has an Oedipal bonus, which Roth with Jamesian discretion leaves undeveloped – marrying Amy-Anne would steal her from Nathan's- and Amy's – 'Dad-da,' the master Lonoff.

Almost nothing happens in *The Ghost Writer* but Roth keeps the crazy mixed-up world of action waiting in the wings, ready to burst in the moment poor Lonoff tries to so much as crack an egg. Perhaps, Roth hints, all life is self-parodic. The novel certainly ends in a burst of frenetic absurdity. After a breakfast rich in tension and ambiguity, Lonoff's wife and mistress both bolt: they can't stand so much wisdom. Amy, an even faster learner than Nathan, heads for the city when she sees her fantasy threaten to become too real. Meanwhile Roth considerately stalls Hope Lonoff's car so her genius husband can drag her back to his castle of art.

As David Plante has said, every 20th-century writer is a ghost of Henry James. We can't choose our fathers. All we can do is choose, like Roth, to reject them. *The Ghost Writer*'s style is remarkably straight, cool and simple – unJamesian. Roth, never having had a Jamesian father, is telling us that he no longer needs one. There never was a Lonoff. American Jewish writers have had to make do with realist and folk-tale patriarchs like Abraham Cahan, Isaac Babel and I. B. Singer, with martyrs like Kafka and Anne Frank, and with the contemporary performers. So Lonoff is a ghost, a fiction, the sort of writer an impressionable young man might imagine finding in an isolated house in the mountains. In *The Ghost Writer* Philip Roth says in the most sharp firm way that he is very much alive and kicking those 'ideological Benya Kriks' in New York from his own hide-out in the Berkshires. And he has got away with it too; *The Ghost Writer* is a well-tempered triumph.

Among this week's contributors:

ROGER RIDDELL has written about the Rhodesian economy, particularly the land issue. He is on the staff of the Catholic Institute for International Relations.

TIM SHALLICE is a research neuropsychologist and a co-author of *The Technology of Political Control.*

KEVIN BROWNLOW is a film-maker and film historian, currently completing a series on the American silent film for Thames TV.

ANDREW SAINT is architectural editor of the *Survey of London*, Greater London Council.

HELEN McNEIL is lecturer in English and American Studies at the University of East Anglia.

BLAKE MORRISON is on the editorial staff of the TLS. His book *The Movement: English Poetry and Fiction in the 1950s* will be published next spring by Oxford University Press.

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CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Alan Ryan

Two at a Time

I remember – perhaps wrongly, since memory is a terrible cheat – that between the ages of 5 and 15 I never read anything you might call a fairy tale, a story in which pure fantasy predominated. I drove the dedicated ladies who ran the local branch of the Islington Public Library close to distraction by my insistence that there just had to be more of Arthur Ransome stories or that someone else must have taken up the biographical burden of Peter Duck and Missee Lee. I also read Biggles books two at a time, but I thought that historical novels were not improved by the intrusion of fairies, witches, Lost Powers, Old Ways and all that guff. The imagination ought to be decently restrained – H. G. Wells and high technology science fiction was one thing, mere spookiness another. I now see the extent to which all this was preparation for a short, slow climb up the class ladder; I was to become a member of the professional middle classes in their decline, and anyone on that path could afford nothing more narcotic to ambition than the diet I set myself.

Whether the English class system has changed, I leave to the sociologically informed; children's books certainly have. The ratio of fairy tale to straight fiction seems to increase each year, and the straighter fiction offers more pictures of how to endure misery than of the pleasures of sunshine and sailing boats on Coniston Water. Heinemann's series of Pyramid books is aimed at teenagers who find the trip from 10 to 20 pretty hard work; although the heroes and heroines more or less win at the end, the moral is downbeat – adolescent love is all-consuming and often unrequited, but luckily not fatal; families are necessary but a source of more or less constant pain; there are jobs which are worth working for, but not an awful lot of them. Alison Prince's *The Night I Sold My Boots* (Heinemann £2.95) rather deftly manages to tell the story of nice-boy-doesn't-get-wild-girl in a style which uses just as many of the clichés of Mills and Boon pulps as the tale can bear. Myra Schneider's *Will the Real Pete Roberts Stand Up* (Heinemann £2.95) has a good brisk narrative line – embracing the social embarrassment of the hero, who is in care, his awkward relations with his perfectly awful Mum, his near miss for a career in jail, and his love for Julie in the pet shop – which allows her to get her didactic point across quite unobtrusively. David Churchill's *The Silbury Triangle* (Heinemann £2.95) is more ambitious, but rather less successful – its hero and heroine are UFO watchers, and Steve, the would-be early school-leaver is saved for art college by the transformation of his sensibility which a brief trip in the UFO achieves. I'm not sure that disgruntled 15-year-olds who can identify with the cast will also take to the story or that their younger siblings who might like the story will identify much with the cast.

In the realm of pure fantasy, Tanith Lee's *Shon The Taken* (Macmillan £4.50) is as marvellously accomplished as ever. Perhaps this is formula writing but it is a formula for vivid pictorial effect, and for deliciously shivery overtones; as usual, it is a story about a young man who gradually becomes aware of his power as he confronts one awesome creature after another, and survives because the courage of this world acquires for him the powers of another. Merlin Price's *The Witch of Rollright* (Rex Collings £4.95) is a splendidly creepy tale – it is set firmly in the present and at clearly identifiable sites, and the heroine is a contemporary schoolgirl but the forces she is fighting are even older than the stone circle of the Rollright Stones.

Victor Kelleher's *The Forbidden Paths of Thual* (Kestrel £3.75) is set in something like Tolkien land; the boy Quen has to go through the forest of Thual in search of the magic stone which will enable his people to drive their oppressors the Mollag away from their villages. Like the famous ring the stone is a curse to its possessor but it does the trick. Even if the story is not very surprising it is well told. *Snow in the Maze* by Barbara Freeman (Macmillan £4.50) is the nicest of this autumn's ghost stories, though. Rosa, a beautiful child who is fed up with being world-famous as the model for the paintings by which her mother earns her living, becomes obsessed with a sad child in an old portrait and strikes up a friendship with the strange young man who looks after the house where the portrait hangs. We are soon adrift from the 20th-century. Ruth Ainsworth's *The Talking Rock* (Deutsch £3.50) will be a bit too sweet for older children but will make good bedtime reading for those who identify with its six-year-old hero and his adventures with sand sprites and mermaids.

Two reissues very well worth noticing are K. M. Brigg's *Kate Crackernuts* (Kestrel £3.95) which is just the sort of thing I used not to like – full of arcane Scotch dialect mixing the tale of an impoverished laird at the time of the Civil War with the doings of old wives and fairy children, and with two girls at its centre – and *Tales Out Of Time* edited by Barbara Ireson (Faber £4.95) which is not so much a reissue as a collection of elderly science fiction stories by proven masters.

In the more or less real world, *Castle Minalto* by John Branfield (Gollancz £4.50) is a neat story of 19th-century Cornish goings on. It brings off a rare trick by seeming to place its hero in great danger early on, then showing that there was no such danger after all, only to bring back a real menace just before the happy ending. *Louie's Ransome* (Deutsch £3.50) takes E. W. Hildick's much admired milkman Louie Lay into the world of international terrorism and kidnapping. His success in defeating his captors owes a lot to the small boys who have graduated from his milk round to posts in the Cabinet, Scotland Yard, and other useful places, but more to the remarkable memory which his profession requires. The only false note is struck by the villainous mastermind, who is too subtle, too singleminded, and much too intelligent to be a university lecturer in American Studies.

If you want something grimmer, realistic about the lives of the 19th-century rural poor, and yet full of a sense of the excitement of the changes brought by the railways, *The Iron Way* by Gillian Cross (Oxford £2.95) will do you very well. Indeed Mrs. Cross's book is impressive not just in its own right, but as representative of the extraordinary professionalism of contemporary children's writers. The solidity of the research behind the historical stories, the quality of the writing almost throughout and the ability to ring new changes on familiar themes are very striking.

One can only hope that parents or libraries or both will be able to pay the high prices publishers now seem to be forced to charge.

Children's Choice for Christmas

ONCE UPON A TIME
Fairy Tales of Long Ago
Illustrated in full colour by GRAHAM PERCY
A beautifully illustrated collection of tales by Grimm, Andersen and Perrault, adapted by Gwen Marsh.
Ages 5 — 9
£4.50

THE KING OF THE GOLDEN RIVER
JOHN RUSKIN
Ruskin's timeless story is illustrated in full colour by the brilliant Argentinian artist, Enrique Breccia. *Ages 6+*
£3.50

ANIMAL SPECIALISTS
The first four titles in a splendid new series — large format, with outstanding colour photographs — describing in fascinating detail some of the main forms of specialization in the animal kingdom. *Ages 8 — 12.*
Hunters Builders
Migrants Nocturnals
each £3.95

DENT

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Maureen Duffy

After Rupert

My first literary memory is Rupert, not in the daily strip but read aloud by an aunt from a book, with coloured sugar-paper pages. He is the first too in a whole tribe of animations and cartoon figures who still people my imagination and form elements of my mental furniture: Meddlesome Matty, Lord Snooty and his pals (particularly Snitchy and Snatchy), Desperate Dan, Keyhole Kate, Pinocchio and on through Rat, Mole and company to Kipling's Puck and E. Nesbit's Moldiwarp. From them all, the path leads out into space and the elfland of Romance. They are important because they showed me early on without my realizing that the reality of art needn't be two-dimensional. I found it as easy to suspend my belief in them as in any of the creations of the contemporary social realism of any period. Their mythological brothers and sisters too came easily to me, some of them in the anthology books I managed to acquire and more in a *Myths and Legends of Many Lands* I still have.

Books were rarely bought except at acknowledged festivals as presents. Those books I owned I had mostly been given second-hand when it became known to workmates and relations that I was 'a reader'. Before I was six I joined the public library and went regularly with my mother, whose passions were Galsworthy, Walpole and Ernest Raymond. My passion at this time and for the next four years was for books about animals, adventure stories and poetry. I dreamt of climbing mountains to see golden eagles hatch or silently watching in night woods for badgers to snuffle out.

I learnt acres of bad poetry, a lot of which is still with me, and began to write my own. At nine I collected what I wanted preserved in a stiff-covered notebook which I still have and from then to fourteen I kept this up so that I have a chronological record of developing craftsmanship and of the poets I had been reading and imitating.

Between ten and eleven I fell in love and this led me deep into Shakespeare's sonnets and to Keats. Daily life was on the whole grim and frightening but it was possible to escape in the imagination and in idealized love. My first encounter with a Shakespeare play, inevitably *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* was deeply disappointing. How could a poet who had written so piercingly words I muttered as I biked to and from school come down to such triviality? My identification with Keats was almost complete and I still see his influence everywhere in everything I write, both prose and verse. I see too the same see-saw between the real and the ideal but where he splits them, prose(letters) and verse, I run them together perhaps because I've had more time.

At eleven Scott was our class reader and I had at last found a prose writer who could affect me like a poet. Generally I despised prose. I was going to be a poet. So far I had developed imagination more than reason, but the real, the everyday, couldn't be ignored forever. It too had to be grasped and synthesized into a whole consciousness and art. But I disliked the English Classics who might have done this or begun it. They seemed to me unrelated to either my real or ideal. Steadily I added poets: Gerard Manley Hopkins, Eliot, Donne. Desperately I tried other historical writers: Harrison Ainsworth, Bulwer Lytton, Philip Lindsay and Margaret Irwin.

Conrad had replaced Scott as class reader but not for me. Fortunately just in time I found Shaw. He wasn't a novelist but he was at least a prose-writer. He delighted me with his wit, reason and iconoclasm, with the sheer quality and pleasure of the performance. I gave up the attempt to come to terms with The English Novel. Reading the *Prefaces* at thirteen made me feel mature and wicked. Shortly after, I consumed a great deal of Koestler, beginning with *The Yogi and the Commissar.* This too seemed more relevant to observable life.

At fourteen I abandoned formal verse patterns for free or cadenced verse after a long bout of Browning. Pound I had never heard of but our results were technically similar as I discovered when a couple of years later someone accused me of imitating him and I decided to check up.

Somewhere about now I began a Russian diet: the great triumvirate of whom Turgenev was my favourite. It seemed to me that the English couldn't write, hadn't written serious fiction at all. I considered reviving the epic *Paradise Lost,* which I'd read several times and knew chunks off by heart, was the only great English novel.

Then examination set books began to rain down on me and demand my unwilling attention. More failed English Classics (Hardy and Conrad again) had to be annotated and analyzed. Mercifully there was Shakespeare and the interest of Chaucer's language. For myself I found Helen Waddell. Reality at this point in my life had become intolerable and I was in full Romantic flight, now spiced with sex; *Peter Abelard* and Petronius Arbiter. At seventeen I published my first poems dating from this time two years before.

There was very little more to come. At university, where we were on the whole sadly taught, I discovered *Ulysses.* Perhaps the English, or the Irish, could write fiction after all. In the seminar at which I gave my paper on it I was the only one, including the tutor, who had read the book. My feeling of wicked sophistication revived but it was the excitement of the Joycean techniques that really took hold of me. There was no need, it seemed, to write a novel in one key or style. And everything could go in: myth, metaphysics, poetry, the insides and outsides of people's heads and guts, sex, religion. It was an enormous liberation. Not that I wanted to write novels. I was half way through a Neo-Jacobean play about a railway strike that would bring back concrete imagery to the theatre.

© 1974, 1979 *by Maureen Duffy*

Henry Tube

Cornish Coast to Wild West

It is perhaps unfortunate that a reviewer of children's fiction should only just have finished reading *Kidnapped* to his own nephews. It sets too high a standard for almost any writer to be judged by. The narrative, the dramatic episodes, the characters, the sensitively tuned relationships are all as fresh and satisfying at the tenth reading as the first. Above all it is a matter of style – a combination of the actual sound of the text with the sense of the author being absolutely in command of his created world. The best children's fiction is not different in kind from adult fiction, only in the degree of complexity.

Alan Breck Stewart is perhaps too equivocal a hero to have been called in for Christopher Leach's *The Great Book Raid* (Dent, £3.95). Long John Silver is there, though, with Hiawatha, Tarzan, Jason, Huckleberry Finn, Robin Hood, King Arthur and even Count Dracula, to defend Jim Massey's Cornish farm against the machinations of a wicked Colonel who means to turn the whole coastline into a modern development. Assembling hastily from their various places of retirement (Silver from an old people's home, Hood from his council house in Nottingham), the heroes are melancholy figures, almost worn out by time, and the pathetic scene in which they bring out their antique 'credentials' – Hood his horn and bow, Jason his dragon's teeth, Hiawatha his moccasins – is the high point of the book. But the author does not have sufficient interest in the contemporary world against which his heroes are pitted to make a real fight of it and the promising idea fizzles out.

The Captain Hook Affair by Humphrey Carpenter, wittily illustrated by the *Guardian*'s Posy Simmonds (Allen & Unwin, £3.95), is a richer development of the same sort of idea. The real world – school and a children's home – is more solidly imagined and the fantasy worlds of well-known children's stories *(Alice, Samuel Whiskers, Peter Pan)* into which the children are carried by a magic pencil grow a little more dangerous each time. But the book is rather ploddingly written and, except in the final Kafkaesque section – when the children are caught in the crooked world of the nursery rhyme and threatened with real disaster – seems strangely unable to take fire from the fantasies it invokes.

Lorna Baxter's *The White Rose and the Black* (Faber, £3.95) is pure fantasy, a Tolkien-style tale of witches and wizards, princes and monsters, good and evil forces struggling for mastery and a lost folk beyond the mountains. The characters are stereotypes and the dialogue tends to be mawkish, but the narrative drive is tremendous, and there are several memorable scenes, such as the heroine's visit to the Flame-folk and her meeting, beside a lake, with a basilisk whose previous victims' petrified bodies stand like statues in and around the water's edge.

Certainly, if you aren't in Stevenson's class

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as a moralist, it is wiser to stick to black and white. Nina Bawden in *The Robbers* (Gollancz, £3.95) takes Islington as her setting and attempts several shades of grey in her story of two boys from different class backgrounds making friends. It is deftly plotted and sparely written and, in its simplified way, a serious enough attempt to deal with contemporary life; but for all Miss Bawden's accomplishment and her good, modern, liberal outlook, there is something Sunday School about it. The entertainment looks suspiciously like a disguise for a lesson in behaviour.

John Rae, the headmaster of Westminster, knows better than to peddle morals. *Return to the Winter Palace* (Hodder & Stoughton, £3.50) is basically a travelogue, in which his own six children take a trip to Leningrad with their mother. The visits to the Winter Palace, the Circus and the Ballet are enlivened by the presence of a mysterious ex-Princess, whose family once owned the Leonardo in the Winter Palace and whom the 12-year-old heroine suspects of trying to steal it back. But although the children craftily engineer the temporary removal of the Princess's KGB shadow, a Mr Oblamov, during the Circus (he is taken into the ring to act as the clown's victim), the whole plot turns out to be only a child's fantasy. Mr Rae's narrative is brisk and he writes a strong, sober prose, but who that reads books wants his feet returned quite so firmly to the ground? If Mr Rae had written *Kidnapped*, Uncle Ebenezer would have emerged as a jolly old sport whose blunderbuss only fired balloons and lollipops.

Iain Crichton Smith's *On the Island* (Gollancz, £4.95), a series of episodes from the life of a poor but proud 11-year-old on Stornoway, seems mainly autobiographical. It is beautifully done, written in a simple but evocative style far beyond the capacity of any of the other new books I have mentioned; yet it is static. The narrative serves the style, instead of the other way round. Margaret Donaldson's *Journey Into War* (Deutsch, £3.95), about a girl caught up in the German invasion of northern France in 1940, is its mirror image, a gripping story poorly served by a trite style.

I should have explained, before making unsporting comparisons with *Kidnapped*, that the books reviewed here are the pick of 84. The two I can recommend unreservedly are both humorous and both virtuoso pieces of storytelling. *Letters from the General* by Paul Biegel (Dent, £3.95) involves four separate narratives under the aegis of a magical aunt and ends with a wedding-feast whose centrepiece is a miniature table for a wedding-party of mice. But it is the sort of book which drops dead if you try to convey its flavour at second-hand. Its pleasure lies in its exuberance and agility and the very thinness of the material over which it dances.

Son of a Gun by Janet and Allan Ahlberg (Heinemann, £3.50) is a galloping, riotous Wild West farce in which the plot thickens with every page until a combined force of Indians, US cavalry, old-timers, dancing-girls and the 8-year-old hero are racing to the rescue of a mother and baby, besieged in their cabin by two incompetent bandits called Slocum. As one of the Slocums says; 'Cavalry *and* Indians? Where's the fairness in that?' Reading either of these books aloud is the next best thing to being an impromptu storyteller oneself.

New Children's Books from Oxford

Marion's Angels
K. M. Peyton

Marion loves the 15th century church in her village and is heartbroken when it is threatened with demolition. This threat brings two visitors whose arrival leads her into an emotional tangle in which there seems to be an element of the supernatural. £3.95

The Iron Way
Gillian Cross

To Jem and his sister the new railway line was all excitement and action, but others in the village saw it as a threat to their peace. When their resentment flared into violence Jem and Kate were at its centre. £2.95

When the Leaves Begin to Fall
Ulf Malmgren
Translated by Joan Tate

An exceptional understanding of young people combines with a rare knowledge of the countryside in this moving novel about teenage love. Winner of Sweden's Foundation for the Promotion of Literature Award for the best book by a new author. £3.25

Published for the International Year of the Child

Arjun and his Village in India
Carol Barker

Carol Barker spent three months in north-west India studying village life on behalf of Oxfam. There she met twelve-year-old Arjun Jat, who told her all about his family and their way of life. The result is this superbly illustrated information picture-book for children of eight to eleven years. £3.75

Oxford Books for Children

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Jeremy Treglown

Six and Under

Already disgruntled by the lack of steam trains near us, our children have begun to ask why neither we nor any of our friends have a parlour-maid. Half the books they've come across in their 4-6 years bristle, after all, with moustachioed, twinkly old men in plus-fours, lifting leather hat-boxes onto the Flying Scotsman, while fresh-faced girls in black frocks and starched pinnies bob up and down beside a gleaming Austin Clifton.

When the stories are good, young children seem not to mind – or even to notice – the most overwhelming archaism. Ardizzone's Tim and Hergé's Tintin are favourites, alongside *Star Wars* and the Mister Men: conjunctions which remind one, too, that the notional appropriate age-range of kids' books is as big as the list of successful settings, periods and genres. But the flight into nostalgia that has lately half-emptied the heads of British adults has made a big mark on books for children. One of the consequences is that if you want a book in which fathers (as distinct not only from mothers but from parlour-maids) do housework, in which mothers have jobs, in which parents split up, or in which people are, for unspectacular reasons and with unheroic consequences, short of money, you have to look hard. Celia Berridge's *What Did You Do In The Holiday*? (Deutsch, £3.25) (answers include: went to my nan's on a bus; nothing; saw a man fall in a pond) is a rare example of a story that corresponds with the experience of a large number of likely readers. So is Astrid Lindgren's *That's My Baby* (Methuen, £3.50), which acknowledges that sibling rivalry may actually mean baby-bashing.

Children's interest in social realism isn't insatiable, obviously, but there are some good fantasies on the market which start somewhere we've been. Steven Kellogg's *The Mysterious Tadpole* (Frederick Warne, £3.50) is a funny, gripping, well-illustrated story about a pet that exceeds expectations: the domesticated tadpole turns out to have been spawned by the Loch Ness Monster. And Ruth Jennings/Nicholas Brennan's *In the Bin* (Kestrel, £3.50), in which an irritable and abstracted dad absent-mindedly puts his sons in the dustbin, produced an impressively absorbed amount of nail-biting round here. Charlotte Firmin makes a welcome return with another anti-consumer-trash fantasy, *Claire's Secret Ambition* (Macmillan, £3.95), about a girl who manages to manipulate her mother's ambition to turn her into a film star so as to get what she really wants, which is a job as a vet. And a very popular piece of free-wheeling is Irina Korschunow/József Wilkón's *Timothy, an Extraordinary Tiger* (Dent, £4.25), about the thwarting of a colonial hunter, and the pursued tiger's adoption and bringing-to-life of a stuffed toy tiger-cub.

Wilkón is one of the most vivid and unpretentious illustrators working in a distinguished market. Of English illustrators, Nicola Bayley stands out impressively from the crowd, with her meticulous close detail and her freedom with colour. She has followed her much-praised *One Old Oxford Ox* with *La Corona and the Tin Frog* (Cape, £3.50), a well-written, as well as beautifully painted, collection of stories by Russell Hoban about old toys. Robert Swindells's more robust and accessible story *The Weather-Clerk* (Hodder, £3.50) is illustrated by a new artist, Petula Stone, in a sharp style influenced by Bayley. And there are many other pictorially strong new books, particularly Thea Leitner/Vladimir Bedenikovic's *The Busy Little Farm* (Kestrel, £3.50), and a rash of stories drawn, more preciously, by Philippe Dumas and Chihiro Iwasaki.

Parents with a heavy reading-aloud schedule always need plenty of funny books, so it's good to see an old Asterix appearing for the first time in English, *Asterix and the Banquet* (Hodder, the hard-back bargain of the year at £1.80), and a second story by Frank Muir about his shaggy dog with an identity crisis, *Prince What-a-Mess* (Benn, £2.95). Edward McLachlan has brought out a very jokey book, too, called *Claude Makes a Change* (G. Whizzard/Deutsch, £3.25), about a chameleon who gets stuck coloured tartan. Collins's Christmas best buy is a fat, headlong collection of four Dr. Seuss classics – 'McElligot's Pool', 'The Zax', 'The Lorax' and 'Scrambled Eggs Super!' – at £4.95.

'The Lorax' is an anarchic attack on industrial pollution, illustrated memorably crudely and full of Seuss's unflaggingly buoyant, tasteless, hilarious internally-rhyming nonsense:

> NOW . . . thanks to your hacking my trees to the ground there's not enough Truffula Fruit to go 'round and my poor Bar-ba-loots are all getting the crummies because they have gas, and no food, in their tummies!'

The many other instructional books around could do with some of this verve. Geoffrey Patterson's *The Oak* (Deutsch, £3.50) is a plodding piece of historical environmentalism, drably illustrated, doing less well and less fully what John S. Goodall did in *The Story of an English Village*. And there are surprisingly many authors who aren't so much dull as inept in their failure to enter the imagination of any conceivable child. Sylvie Selig and Fay Maschler continue their inconsequential series with *T. G. and Moonie Have a Baby* (Cape, £2.50), in which Moonie doesn't realise she's pregnant until her husband, T. G. explains it to her, and in which the baby finally appears from nowhere – an insult not only to children's intelligence but to their inquisitiveness, and a needless addition to a saga that can only be explained as some kind of private joke of the authors'. Brian Robb patronises his readers the other way in *The Last of the Centaurs* (Deutsch, £3.75), by treating them like ponderous adults: 'It was only when Ursula and Achilles began to interest themselves in the form for the forthcoming Derby that my suspicions began to deepen, and even then only tentatively'. One for readers-aloud who fancy themselves as plummy fireside Donald Sindens.

Best of the lot are the pop-up books. No child could be sorry to be given *The Pop-Up Book of Gnomes* (Kestrel, £3.50) – it's full of working cardboard machinery and mobile dwarves, one of them on a swing. Similarly impractical, destructible and irresistible is the same publisher's reprint of a 19th-century German pop-up circus: 3-D table-top theatre-in-the-round for £3.95; and – since circuses don't change that much – even the nostalgia seems up-to-date.

John Coleman

Home Truths

A few teachers still resent parents who try to further their children's eduation at home via the judiciously dropped hint or book; and most kids go through a tiresome, if necessary, period of groaning. 'But we do all that at *school*!' (They don't.) Both groups are to be ignored if the world is to grow up. What follows is for the domestic purchaser: a ruthless selection made from well over 100 factbooks and based on personal pleasure, illumination and sometimes irritation. The timeliest arrival is Judith Hann's *The Family Scientist* (Macdonald & Jane's £6.95), whose title makes a point of bringing parents into the act and whose cornucopian contents are models of lucidity and intelligent compression. Profusely illustrated, this elegant compendium embraces plants and animals, body and mind, heat and cold, the sky, physics, chemistry, food and cooking, light, sound, water and the atmosphere, proposing along the way masses of plausible projects and experiments. All right, one may not actually have made the lighthouse, used an egg for osmosis, constructed a praxinoscope or tested fish fingers for starch, but only a dolt would doubt this formidable presenter from BBC-TV's 'Tomorrow's World'. I'd follow her anywhere and – as one to whom science was Stinks and the cash of falling glass – almost managed to.

For those with smaller kids and budgets, but bent on making observation fun, Usborne's 'Younger Spotter's Guides', to *Zoo Animals, Trees, Dogs, Birds* and more (35p each), are pocket-sized and painless. Rather older animal enthusiasts would enjoy Bent Jørgensen's 'Wildlife of the World' series (Hodder & Stoughton 70p each), six titles covering Europe, Africa, Asia (a mere 1,000 Komodo dragons left, islanded in Indonesia), North America, South America, and the Arctic and Antarctic. Noel Simon's 'Animal Families' series, excitingly illustrated in colour and black-and-white by Terry Riley, continues with *Kangaroos, Tigers* and *Polar Bears* (Dent £2.25 each): there is an informed emphasis on conservation. Closer to home in every sense – big print for the young, smaller print and more detail at the back for the attendant adult – is Vanessa Luff's brilliantly delicate picture-book, *Animals in Winter* (A. & C. Black £3.50). An exquisite double-page spread shows how birds not of a feather flock together when grub's short.

Publishers have an absolute thing about ponies and dinosaurs. And there must be more books about castles than there are castles. But, no, Sheila Sancha's *The Castle Story* (Kestrel £5.95) has an end-map of the British Isles locating 93 of them and I would swear she has visited them all and her drily told tale is fresh and fascinating, with lots of her own sketches and photographs – sometimes sketches over photographs – and eight years' loving labour everywhere evident. She sums it up soundly herself: one of her aims was to 'put medieval people back into their

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ruined rooms' and the outcome has been 'a sweeping history of Britain from the earliest times up to the end of the medieval period'. *Now* pull up that drawbridge.

That modest 'sweeping', it must be said, applies better to another of Usborne's proliferating ventures, units eight and nine of their 'Children's Picture World History' (£2.50 hardcover, £1.25 paperback). Dr Anne Millard's *Exploration and Discovery* whips briskly from 1450 to 1750, all in 32 pages full of lurid little pictures and a faintly *1066 and All That* text: 'This is Machiavelli, an Italian who wrote a book about politics called *The Prince,* in which he said that a ruler had to be ruthless'. Page two has a footnote: 'AD stands for two Latin words.' It goes on to explain what they signify, but why not also say what they *are*? The same doctor's *The Age of Revolutions,* 1750 to 1914, is equally helter-skelter. I know I praised Usborne's *Children's Encyclopedia of Prehistoric Life* (which collects the first three units of this 'World History'), but by now we're down to barmecidal hors-d'oeuvre.

More rewarding, since they bite off less and chew it more slowly, are the large-format 'History in Pictures' flatties (Macmillan Children's Books £3.95 each): *Prehistoric Man,* up to 5,000 BC; *The First Civilizations,* 5,000 BC-1,200 BC; *Traders and Warriors,* 1,200 BC-500 BC; and *Greece and Rome Victorious,* 500 BC-200 BC – by different hands but under the awe-inspiring editorship of Plantagenet Somerset Fry. Simple texts are accompanied by good photographs, maps and line-drawings. Unfortunately too many of the double-page illustrations look like posters for movie spectaculars. That might, of course, have been the idea. That history can be presented in an aesthetically beguiling fashion is proved by Fay Ross-Magenty's delightful *London: The Story of a City* (Macdonald £2.95). The author has a nose for the piquant and her picture researchers have done her proud. My only complaints are that a magnifying-glass is needed to do justice to some of the crowded 'conversation-pieces' and old maps; and there is a bewildering hiccough in the text, jerking us from The Great Exhibition of 1851 almost straight into the second world war.

Briefly and firmly recommended: Dorothy Baldwin's *Know Your Body* (Kestrel £4.95), a no-nonsense guide for adolescents through spots, sweating, sex, sulks and self-absorption (try this one on granny: 'Am I different if I don't masturbate? Of course not!); two 'Beans' books, Vanessa Peet's *Bakery* and Maria Fitzgerald's *Pottery* (A. & C. Black £2.50 each), which follow craftsmen relishing their work; Camilla Jessel's *Life at the Royal Ballet School* (Methuen £4.50), a *grand jeté* above a couple of others aimed at young dancers; and an invaluable clutch of what-to-do, where-to-go, where-to-see reference works published by Evans and compiled by Elizabeth Holt and Molly Perham, *Sport* and *Hobbies (£2.50 each), Historic Transport* and *Wildlife* (£2.80 each), not forgetting John Lucas's devoted and first-hand *The Magic of London's Museums* (Exley Publications £2.95).

All good children should cross the Channel one day and a word would go to *The Book of Paris* (Angus & Robertson £4.95), a breezy enough introduction, if the end-paper place-names had been properly proof-read and *montre* were feminine. *Mais . . .*

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

John Spurling

Nos Semblables

Thirties *Hayward*

Thirties is not as ambitious as its title, even without the definite article, implies. The exhibition does not set out to recapitulate a decade in world history, but simply to display examples of 'British art and design before the war'. Of course its effect is in some sense to act as a time-machine, though for the people of the Thirties all these then new-minted objects would have been mere addenda – and often unwelcome addenda – to the great residue of objects from previous periods. Since the purpose of the exhibition is nowhere clearly stated – the catalogue, fat as it is, has a curiously scrappy air, as if put together by a committee which never met – one must assume that no particular purpose is intended beyond assembling the research material for a do-it-yourself thesis, a kind of Jackdaw kit. Certainly there is nothing meretricious or fairground about it. The layout is sober and, except for a few models (including Lutyens's Liverpool Cathedral, the RMS 'Orion' and the Short Empire Flying Boat), two jet-engines, some Dinky cars and a full-size replica of Sir Malcolm Campbell's Bluebird, there is little to appeal to the Christmas holiday trade.

The heart of the exhibition is its fine and applied art. William Feaver, the *Observer*'s art critic and chairman of the organising committee, has had the bright idea of rebuilding the Hayward's uncompromising interior, so that what is usually a concrete parking-space is now an inhabitable room surrounded on all four sides by a partly glassed-in gallery. The paintings, beginning with a row of literary portraits hang below, while up in the gallery is a mini-V & A of pots, furniture, fabrics, glass, silver, clocks, ornaments, rugs, wireless sets and even scent-bottles and cigarette-lighters. The paintings and sculpture are arranged in a close, domestic way which suits the unpretentious nature of many of them, but tends to suggest that they are there more as delegates to a representative gathering than as works of art in their own right.

Nevertheless it's an impressive reminder of what you could have seen and perhaps even owned in the Thirties if you'd had your eyes about you: Nash, Spencer, Burra, Bomberg, Sutherland, Moore, Hepworth, Nicholson, David Jones all in full flow, with Francis Bacon, Mary Potter and Rodrigo Moynihan making their debuts.

The forgotten period pieces are represented there too, notably three with erotic overtones: *Two Schoolgirls* by James Cowie, Lancelot Glasson's brazenly demure stripper, *The Young Rower*, which was the Royal Academy picture of the year in 1932, and an appalling example of Soviet/Nazi Realism softened to English taste. It's called *Hiking*, by J. W. Tucker, and depicts three huge girls in shirts, shorts and rucksacks consulting a map, with a village church, manor-house and cottages

behind. More than anything else in the show it conjures up Baldwin's Britain, the complacent suburban dream to which most of the best things here were as irrelevant as the sinister foreign connections of these strapping Valkyries.

Artists in the Thirties, of course, were still entirely dependent on private patronage. Some like Bomberg suffered accordingly, both financially and psychologically. Others were made enlightened use of for various commercial and semi-commercial purposes. The Shell Guides by John Piper and Paul Nash are an obvious example, and there were Shell advertisements by Rex Whistler, John Armstrong, Edward Bawden, E. McKnight Kauffer (who also did posters for the Underground and the GWR), Sutherland and Nicholson. Dulac, and again Whistler and Sutherland did designs for stamps, Nicholson did a poster for Imperial Airways; Sutherland, Bawden, Nash and Wadsworth did posters for London Transport. Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant designed dinner-services; Sutherland and Nash glasses and cups-and-saucers; McKnight Kauffer and Frank Brangwyn carpets; Hepworth and Nicholson textiles.

Most eclectic of all was Eric Gill, self-taught sculptor, engraver, letterer, economist, religious communard, unabashed eroticist. He died in 1940 and has been unjustly neglected ever since, though there was a small exhibition of his life and work at Dartington this summer which is now at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge. Gill pops up all over *Thirties,* with a large stone mural of Odysseus and Nausicaa commissioned by the LMS railway for its hotel at Morecambe; a painted wooden clock designed for the Chairman of the Sun Engraving Company; a silver almsdish for the worshipful company of Goldsmiths; wood-engravings of

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a voluptuous nude and a Descent from the Cross; floral designs and lettering for the George VI 6d stamp of 1937; and a maquette for the Prospero and Ariel sculpture over the entrance to Broadcasting House.

Arts, crafts and architecture are displayed on the lower floors of the Hayward. The top floor is as scrappy as the catalogue. There are small sections for the Post Office, the BBC, the Railways, etc., ludicrously inadequate gestures towards industrial and car design and, under the vaguely portentous heading 'Society Observed', a few token paintings by the Euston Road School and the Ashington Group, a collection of press photographs from *The Daily Herald*, odd cartoons by Low and Fougasse, a display of Penguin books, magazines, comics, a case of toys and 15 cinema stills. The whole thing tails away in a handful of desultory images representing 'War'.

All the same, I left the gallery with an odd feeling of not having left it. It was not just that I was born in the Thirties and that my first clear memories are of the deck of a Union Castle liner from which I had dropped my rubber Popeye overboard, nor that several of the leading artists are still with us. It was rather that, allowing for superficial differences, such as the Thirties' taste for drab colours and hard forms, our world is still extraordinarily close to theirs, particularly at the level of the humdrum. Food packaging, commercial air travel, mass-produced cars, telephones that rest on a stand, wireless and television, electric gadgets, Roneos, advertising, suburban homes, paperbacks, all the appurtenances of the comfortable consumer society: in many ways the Thirties was less a period in itself than the beginnning of the period we are still living through. The last RT double-decker bus, introduced in 1939, was withdrawn from service in April this year. Perhaps the 50-year omnibus, 1930-1979, is about to be withdrawn from service too. Perhaps the secret purpose of *Thirties* was to wrap up Seventies.

Next week Andrew Saint will review the architectural exhibits at the Hayward Gallery.

Opera Records

Peter Conrad

Mozart Octogenarian

Perhaps because Mozart so mysteriously lacks the self-dramatising creative conceit of the romantics, the latter-day romantics who conduct his operas make him the gift of their own superabundant egotism. The new Mozart opera sêts derive their character from the conductors: Karajan's Mozart is slick and seraphic, Solti's explosive, Maazel's sinister and cruelly precise, Böhm's wise and temperate.

Karajan's *Nozze di Figaro* (Decca £21) is conducted with a dapper virtuosity, which is demonstrated either by frenetically quickening the pace (as in the overture) or dreamily decelerating it (as in Cherubino's arias, which are swooning rather than hectic and erotically urgent). The sleek orchestra subdues and distances the voices. For the most part, the singing is kept below a whisper. Figaro's 'Susanna pian-pian' is the motto of the performance. The recitative before 'Si vuol ballare' is not outraged but terse, muttered, repressed: Karajan has no interest in the work's political conflicts, and Figaro's aria therefore speeds by, sounding nimble and elegant, not menacing. In the Countess's bedroom, Figaro breathes his plans insinuatingly rather than chortling over them in jovial extroversion, and even Marcellina's 'Ecco tuo padre' isn't a farcical crow of triumph but a secret shamefully uttered. There is a certain dramatic sense to this muffling of the voices. The opera is about people guarding information from one another and scheming under their breaths. But the enforced muting stifles character: José van Dam's Figaro is bland; Ileana Cotrubas, on stage a shrewd, shrewish Susanna, here sounds impersonally angelic; Frederica von Stade as Cherubino smoothes out her arias by omitting consonants, thus making beautiful nonsense of them. Only the dangerous, forceful Count of Tom Krause manages to impose himself, and when he's singing Karajan even allows the orchestra to make a little noise. The slow tempo for his aria also lends him a malicious, predatory pomposity.

But Karajan new set as a whole seems a miracle more of engineering than of emotional penetration.

Maazel's *Don Giovanni* (CBS £12.49) is the soundtrack of Losey's film, which sets the action in a dead landscape of stagnant lagoons and frigid Palladian villas. The prelude consequently is more a funeral march than a report on the libertine's progress. Maazel's emphases are doom-laden throughout: listen to the stealthy, mournful commentary the orchestra makes when Anna discovers her father's body, or the halting, troubled pace of the quartet. Ruggero Raimondi's Giovanni is a demon not a seducer, and the Leporello of José van Dam is gloomily disapproving, not gross. Their exchanges are snarling and violent, and van Dam's reading of the catalogue is dour, as if like the Commendatore he's conducting a saturnine inquest into the hero's excesses. The sound is clinical: the microphones deliberately don't flatter the luxurious voice of Kiri Te Kanawa (Elvira), which here seems thin and neurotically obsessive; the oscillations in the voice of Edda Moser (Anna) mark her as a hysteric; the plummy artificiality of Kenneth Riegel (Ottavio) suits that character's fatuity.

The true emotional centre, however, of the performance, astonishingly, is Zerlina, who as presented by Teresa Berganza becomes Giovanni's opposite and antagonist, the embodiment of an innocent vital joy and of a sacred trust. She is frightened of Giovanni, sensing in him a destroyer, and her hesitations in 'La ci darem' aren't soubrettish teasing but a genuine anxiety as she falters before evil. This is why her abduction at the party is so shocking, and why her two reconciliations with Masetto are so moving.

George Solti's *Don Giovanni* (Decca £21) is a transformation of the same work. Solti sympathises with the hero's sensual elation; this sympathy leads him to whip the overture into a fine frenzy. His Giovanni, Bernd Weikl, is a jolly sexual anarch, hectoring and a bit blowsy of voice: he enjoys parodying the vocal line with libertine-like dim innuendi and portamenti, as in the serenade to Elvira. Leporelli is Gabriel Bacquier (himself a burned-out Giovanni), who grovels, gibbers, and relishes every seamy innuendo. Between them there's a chuckling comradeship, not the crackling enmity of Maazel's pair. Margaret Price's Anna has a fearless, unearthly brilliance. Her decorations are chillingly exact. Stuart Burrows is a languishing, mellifluous Ottavio: as played by Solti, 'Dalla sua pace' becomes an enchanted erotic reverie, not the usual trite sermon. The Elvira of Sylvia Sass is more questionable, affected and self-indulgent where it should be ardent and impulsive. 'Mi tradi', instead of a desperate resolution to save Giovanni, is delivered as a self-pitying soliloquy. Zerlina is Lucia Popp, cute where Berganza is solemn. Her character is abruptly altered by Solti's inclusion of the scene (cut by Maazel) in which she attempts to geld Leporello with a razor: suddenly she becomes a castrating vixen, and her musical idiom changes to an angry floridity.

Superintended by Losey, Mazzel's *Don Giovanni* is a drama, compelling even if often roughly sung; Solti's is more of a vocal concert. But together they testify to the extraordinary versatility of the opera, which is remade by each new group of interpreters.

Karl Böhm's virtues as a Mozartean are those of Mozart's Tito-clemency, justice, sage moderation.

His performance of *Clemenza di Tito* (DGG £15.17) is occasionally sedate (for instance in the conflagration scene), but the final expansive chorus in praise of the hero is movingly eloquent. Teresa Berganza as Sesto is fraught and doleful. The timbre of the voice beseeches our sympathy, and her singing has a classical reserve which is particularly apt for this stoical character. Peter Schreier has the pure, passionless tones of an overgrown choirboy (which is what he is), yet this vocal character matches the unreality of Tito, who by his own choice is more a political emblem than a person. The dry, tight voice exactly conveys the self-advertising calculation of the character's actions, and Schreier executes the flourishes in his aria skilfully: coloratura here is a language of nonchalant, self-glorifying power. His Italian though remains raspingly unidiomatic. Julia Varady manages the extremes of Vitellia's range easily, but for this reason lacks the desperation of Janet Baker on Colin Davis's recording for Philips. Her rondo too is blithe instead of remorseful. Böhm's *Tito* is serener than Davis's, emphasising generous reconciliation not tension and disaffection.

Böhm turns the opera into the kind of work Mozart might have written if, like the conductor, he'd survived to be an octogenarian.

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Theatre – 1

Benedict Nightingale

Obscene Child

Amadeus by PETER SHAFFER *Olivier*
The Guise by DAVID MOWAT *Theatre Upstairs*
I Sent a Letter to My Love by BERNICE RUBENS *Greenwich*

There was a moment in *Amadeus* that reminded me of the movie in which Beethoven's landlord proclaimed his presence with an ominous rat-tat-tat-TAT on the composer's door. A look of Archimedean discovery flashed across the towering genius's craggy brow, and he dashed to his piano, and then and there began to concoct the Fifth Symphony.

In Peter Shaffer's version, court tunesmith Salieri fêtes the newly-arrived Mozart with a tiny and rather tinny march, upon which the boy-wonder promptly improvises some indolent variations, ending up, believe it or not, with a hit-song from the still-unwritten *Figaro*. Well, perhaps it happened. The programme informs us that Mr. Shaffer was music critic for *Time and Tide* all the way from 1961 to 1962, and he obviously knows his Wolfgang better than most of us. All the same, isn't he inclined to take a romantic, not to say sensational view of composers and composition?

Simon Callow's Mozart is an enterprising piece of acting, but a calculated travesty as biographical. The tactless, mercurial youth, with his well-authenticated weakness for lavatorial banter, is transformed into a spectacularly boorish coprophiliac, with a goofy mule-face and a habit of half-snickering, half-braying, like a castrated donkey. He tumbles clownishly on stage with Felicity Kendal's glad-eyed Constanze – herself apt to signal her less-than-courtly manners with a pert 'ta, very much' – and winsomely promises 'to shit on your nose and watch it run down your chin'. Soon, he is outraging the Hapsburg hierarchy by denouncing his rivals as 'dogshit' or the pre-Mozartian opera as 'boring', leaping onto a chair, tittering and gesticulating as he does so, for all the world like a tarted-up chimp in a Brook Bond ad. Critics apt to take a heady, 19th-century view of 'inspiration' have wondered how a billiard-playing freemason could have composed *Giovanni* or the *Jupiter*, just as they've been shocked at the idea of a money-conscious Stratford burgher writing *Lear*. Shaffer passes the incongruity still further: how could the Mass in C minor conceivably have been penned by an 'obscene child'?

This view of Mozart actually comes from his Salieri, whose 18th-century wig camouflages a far-from-18th-century sensibility. In my experience, musicians tend to discuss their art in technical, downbeat, even banal terms, presumably believing, with Stravinsky, that 'the only true critical comment on a piece of music is another piece of music'; and they would surely have been even more reticent in the rational Austrian 1780's. But Shaffer's Salieri rises to the reverential ecstasies of Emerson, Nietzsche, or the Carlyle who declared that music 'leads us to the edge of the Infinite and lets us for moments gaze into that'. He stumbles from the sound of a Mozart divertimento, deciding he has heard 'the voice of God'; swoons at the very manuscript of the great Mass announcing he's staring through inkpots at 'an absolute beauty'; dubs the late piano concerti 'the finest things made by man in the 18th century'; describes the *Requiem* as 'absolute music'; and proceeds to take monstrous revenge on the divine upstart.

The result is a didactic melodrama, very characteristic of Shaffer. From *Five Finger Exercise* on he has been celebrating the soul of man as it's incarnated in art, and dramatising its battles with philistinism and envy. Indeed, his world has sometimes seemed reducible to an enlightened clique, rapturously crying 'Leonardo', 'Wells Cathedral', 'Peter Grimes' or 'Ingmar Bergman', and a horrid rump, out to deride or destroy such marvels. This play adds Mozart to the cultural treasury, Salieri to the enemies list, but little, I fear, to Shaffer's own reputation as a dramatist. One trouble is that his appreciation of the composer is too vague, general and mindlessly rhapsodic, akin to one of those soaring but unevenly informative travelogues about the beauties of Rome or the wonders of Peking. Where, for instance, is there adequate recognition of the discipline and astringency I hear in my own current obsession, the string quintet K516? The other trouble is the outrageous implausibility of Salieri himself.

The prototype is thought to have schemed to Mozart's disadvantage, and, in his senility, is said to have claimed to have poisoned him. From these hints and rumours Shaffer manufactures a blend of Iago and Faust, much at odds with the historical Salieri, whose conventional efforts were as triumphant as Mozart's musical adventures were neglected, and therefore had no motive for murder. He will ruin the creature who has 'made me feel my emptiness as Adam felt his nakedness'. Doing so he will 'block' God, who has perversely given Mozart the creative genius he prayed for and left him only the agony of perceiving it. He will strike a blow for the world's mediocrities. The tale of the spectral stranger who commissioned what was in effect to be Mozart's own Requiem is well-known. According to Shaffer it was actually a plot devised by the fiendish Salieri. Not content with undermining Mozart's reputation and reducing him to penury, he exploited his Freudian confusions and shattered his damaged morale by confronting him with his dead father in the form of the Stone Guest, a looming shadow who grimly materialises and makes his deadly request to the awesome chords of *Giovanni*: a theatrical moment that Peter Hall, whose production is generally as temperate as hostile circumstances allow, should surely have resisted.

It is a part and a play written for Sir Henry Irving, who unluckily turned out to be indisposed. Paul Scofield is, however, an admirable substitute: not because of any ingenuities of interpretation, though his baleful silence and charged smiles are as eloquent as one would expect; not even for that celebrated voice which ranges from a sepulchral rumble to a quavering squeal, as of Larry the Lamb in second childhood; but because of the effortless power, the brooding charisma, of his mere presence. It is difficult to imagine *Amadeus* with Scofield in command. But that may be because without him to rivet and mesmerise us Mr. Shaffer's lavish argosy would simply sink.

The Guise is a lost tragedy by Webster that has been speculatively reconstructed by David Mowat for surreptitious performance by his Commonwealth-period characters; and 'the guise' is also the pretence of liberty, which somehow allowed the puritans to close theatres for the public good. Let me try to clarify by telling you that this adds up to a play about half-derelict players playing a play about (among other things) the pornographic plays commissioned by a corrupt king of France who, like the disgraced English monarch of 1648, was actually called Charles. Parallels proliferate, intricacies accumulate; and we're plunged into what's partly an anachronistic debate about the value of drama, partly a celebration of the brave men who kept the great tradition alive in defiance of persecution, poverty, and the demoralising growth of backstreet theatre catering for the dirty doublet-and-hose brigade. The intellectual result is teasing; the human one I fear, somewhat lacking in idiosyncrasy, quirk, surprise; and it all left me with the not-unpleasant feeling of having watched a good game of computerised chess.

The first half of Bernice Rubens's tale of the aging maid who becomes her crippled brother's pen-pal is tense, touching, and sensitive in its skirtings round touchy subjects, unrecognised incestuous desire and the sexuality of those debilitated by time and disease: the second half's grip loosens, and the protagonist dwindles into psychosomatic case-study, too particular and peculiar for us to identify easily with her pain. Rossling Leach doughtily dominates throughout, but can't eradicate the final impression, which is that a fine novelist has over-complicated a potentially fine play.

Music

Andrew Clements

A Genius

The Stravinsky Festival *South Bank; further concerts 9, 13, 16 and 23 November*
Stravinsky: The Composer and his Works by ERIC WALTER WHITE *Faber* £13.50

There has already been so much to marvel at and to enjoy, so much more is promised, that just past the halfway stage the Stravinsky Festival is in danger of being taken for granted. The present clutch of 11 concerts is only the first phase, concentrating on Stravinsky's orchestral and instrumental music: the second phase, to include all the works with voice, is planned for the spring of 1981. The mammoth enterprise is the most ambitious in a series of musical celebrations that David Atherton has planned and directed in the last six years, beginning with the London Sinfonietta's Schoenberg and Gerhard series in 1973 and continued most recently with the complete works of Webern last winter.

The Stravinsky Festival is rather different from its predecessors, however. It is, I imagine, likely to be more successful in box-office terms – Stravinsky is the one modern master (with the partial exception of Bartok)

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to have made the transition from important Historical Figure to the standard concert programme – and the series is thus able to stand as part of the commercial concert life of London without the specialist attraction of a wealth of first performances of juvenilia and marginalia.

Stravinsky's career has been scrupulously documented, not least by the composer himself, and there remains little music to be discovered. Atherton has unearthed a few unpublished arrangements and tiny *pièces d'occasion*, but there is nothing on the scale of the early work heard during the Webern series, nor anything to cast a new light on the composer's character as the satirical and cabaret pieces by Schoenberg did when the London Sinfonietta revived them. The sheer size of this new festival, too, is intimidating: Stravinsky's orchestral works sometimes require the fullest of full symphony orchestras and so the workload is shared this time between the Sinfonietta and the London Symphony Orchestra, co-operation between independent orchestras of which the organisers are understandably very proud. A band of distinguished soloists – Kyung-Wha Chung, Stephen Bishop-Kovacevich, Katia and Marielle Labeque, Michel Béroff – takes the solo items.

The mixture is potent, skilfully programmed. Inevitably during a series on this scale there are moments when one doubts its basic premise, when its very comprehensiveness can seem self-defeating. During Michel Béroff's recital of the bulk of the solo piano music for instance: Stravinsky's early F sharp minor Piano Sonata is long, repetitive and a pale pastiche of Tchaikovsky that requires the most persuasive advocacy; Béroff's performance of the Sonata and of the remaining works in this programme was drab and uncommitted, the only time in the Festival that the standard has been less than acceptable. For the rest, however, interpretations have been lively, colourful and perceptive. David Atherton's approach may lack some warmth in the rich textures of the 'Russian' ballets, when the lean, muscular sound that he cultivates with both the LSO and the London Sinfonietta can seem too austere, but his virtues of rhythmic precision, transparent texturing and straightforward phrasing are well suited to the expository quality of his performances.

Yet most of the audience will go to the Stravinsky Festival for the chances it provides to hear neglected works, not for *The Firebird*, *Petrushka, The Rite of Spring* or *Pulcinella*. The division between instrumental and vocal music, necessary for practical reasons, has resulted in some lack of balance between the programmes: there is a high proportion of music from Stravinsky's middle, 'neo-classical' period, and few substantial pieces from his late, serial style. This Friday's programme includes the one large-scale orchestral score from his last period, the ballet *Agon*; that concert, which also includes the Violin Concerto, the Capriccio for piano and orchestra and the orchestral Variations (*Aldous Huxley In Memoriam*) is to my mind the most priceless of the entire first phase, three unfamiliar masterpieces in a single concert. It is indeed a relief to find the density of masterpieces in these concerts so high; such a celebration of the most versatile genius of 20th-century music would have seemed hollow without such an apparently inexhaustible supply of fertile invention.

The series is accompanied by a handsome programme booklet, with short functional notes on all the works being performed imaginatively presented and laid-out. But to coincide with the Festival Faber has published a new edition of Eric Walter White's compendious study of the composer. 'Study' perhaps suggests an analytical approach the book does not attempt; White is content to catalogue and describe each work, to provide a thumbnail sketch of the salient features and to place it in context. A short biography precedes the register of works. In the absence of a thorough study of Stravinsky's music and as a handy source of information on his life the book remains invaluable. The first edition came out in 1966; White has now added a section on Stravinsky's last completed works, the *Requiem Canticles* (originally to have been called *Sinfonia da Requiem*, White tells us, but retitled by the composer because 'I seem to have shared too many subjects and titles with Mr Britten already'), and a setting for soprano and piano of *The Owl and the Pussy-cat*, and an extra chapter of biographical information. He deals delicately but firmly with the contentious issue of whether the last books of conversations between Stravinsky and Robert Craft owes much to Stravinsky: 'Stravinsky still exercised control over what was printed and publised under their joint names and accepted his share of the responsibility' and fills in a little of the detail of the legal wrangles over the composer's estate that began before his death. It is an affectionate portrait.

Television

Julian Barnes

Sacrimonious

Shortly after the Soviet tanks arrived in Prague, an old music-hall comic appeared on one of David Frost's late-night shows and came out with a giggling crack about 'bouncing Czechs'. I still remember the horrified chiding he got in return from a normally satirical Frost. So it came as more than a surprise on *Saturday Night People* (LWT) to hear young, finger-on-the-pulse Simon Hoggart of the *Guardian* quipping that most people thought the Labour Party NEC were trying to turn Britain into 'Cambodia – but without the luxuries'. Did Hoggart reflect at all when he was scripting his autocue? The survival of the crack becomes stranger when you consider that the programme is prerecorded; and, moreover, that a few minutes later Russell Harty was introducing a short review of John Pilger's harrowing film about Cambodia which had been shown earlier in the week. So should we deduce that the editor of *SNP* was unaware of any discrepancy of tone; or, perhaps, that he was quietly sticking it to Hoggart?

Apart from this, the first episode of the new series was smarter, sexier, and more relaxed than anything last time round. The best item was a hilarious (and wickedly well-edited) scrap between two seedy handlers of 'kiss-and-tell memoirs'. Apart from the normal animal noises of greed and envy which came slurping out of my fireside Cloaca Maxima, what caught the ear as the two representatives of the likes of Britt Ekland, Susan George and Angie Bowie vied with each other was the tension between conflicting motives: on the one hand, the temptation to claim that the boff bio in question was jam-packed with wall-to-wall sex; on the other, the need not to be seen publicly slagging your own client. 'I think she's mentioned all the men she's had it . . . er, been involved with,' explained Susan George's promoter, rapidly changing mounts (or styles of mount, maybe) in midstream; 'she's much more of an upmarket nice girl than Britt Ekland.' A few minutes later his rival was admiringly touting the Bowies as 'the first couple to admit to bisexuality – they made bisexuality respectable.' Maybe he should sign up the Harold Nicolsons before someone gets in first.

Reginald Bosanquet invented a useful new portmanteau word this week: *sacrimonious*. A necessary coinage, combining the best elements of *sanctimonious* and *sacrilegious*; it means, I guess, a sort of self-satisfied blasphemy, an oily iconoclasm. Bosanquet launched his word down the slipway of language while signing off the first part of *News at Ten*; after the break, he promised, we would have Hua Guofeng's rubbishing of the Soviet Union, 'and we'll also have some less sacrimonious words from Virginia Wade, captain of the women's Wightman Cup team'.

Miss Wade, when she came on, thought we had a fair chance; David Vine on BBC-2 claimed to think we had a fair chance. This column didn't think we had a Malteser in hell's chance – playing away from home, on a court slow enough to make every ball sit up and beg, and with our two top players, Wade and Barker, both fast-surface players with a destructive tendency to boil over on any court where their most bloke-like groundstrokes constantly come looping back all wrapped up in patiently applied topspin. But then, this column's jaundiced reaction to sitting through what turned out to be the Whitewash Cup was doubtless aggravated by the BBC's callous curtailment of the *Mazda Cars Classic* (BBC-2), which contained the only real tennis of the week. Entry was restricted to those over 35; many of the great names were there; and the BBC allowed us two heady evenings' viewing before declining to show us the final (in which Gonzales just lost to Okker). Watching Laver valiantly going down to Owen Davidson (a player he used to eat for breakfast), or Sedgman and Gonzales huffing and puffing and dripping with sweat – but above all *thinking*, working at ways to outsmart their disgruntled muscles – one recalled Auden's 'About suffering they were never wrong, the Old Masters'. So it rankled more than a little on Saturday, when rain interrupted the Whitewash Cup, to have David Vine boasting to Dan Maskell down the transatlantic cable about how he had been sneaking a look at the Mazda final, and then enthusing sacrimoniously to us about showing a replay of Anne Hobbs plodding to damp and error-strewn defeat at the hands of Kathy Jordan. It was like hoping for *The Big Match* and getting televised blow football.

'When the Great War broke out, it came to me not as a superlative tragedy, but as an interruption of the most exasperating kind to my personal plans.' The first episode of *Testament of Youth* faithfully transmitted what

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Vera Brittain called 'this egotistical view of history's greatest disaster', with Cheryl Campbell (the schoolmistress/whore of *Pennies From Heaven*) making a strong, touching start as the alternatively tentative and headstrong heroine. The autobiography slips easily into play form (it was, after all, originally planned as a novel, which may help), though adaptor Elaine Morgan has taken liberties with the Brittain parents, pointing them up rather more into provincial stereotypes. This renders her subject's struggle more heroic – though the motive is probably dramatic rather than feminist. For instance, Vera Brittain describes her father's attitude to her academic ambitions as one of 'good-natured scepticism' – suggesting something rather different from the truculent, threatened character Emrys James portrays: even his ears manage to pink up with rage when his daughter mentions Oxford. So far, James's bristly encapsulation of patriarchal attitudes is what has most ensnared the eye: 'They pay *her* – actual cash?' he puzzles loudly on hearing of Vera's exhibition to Somerville. Recommended – if less than required – viewing.

Films

John Coleman

Cross Purposes

Monty Python's Life of Brian (AA) *Plaza*
This Sweet Sickness (X) *Camden Plaza*
Sybil (X) *Cinecenta*
Mad Max (X) *Warner 2; Classic, Oxford Street; Scene; ABCs Bayswater, Fulham & Edgware Roads*

If you except the Crazy Gang, who anyway tended to come in pairs and were into a different sort of humour, the Monty Python team must be unique, a sextet of comedians, together now for a decade, each a marvellous creative talent in his own right. Their *Life of Brian*, far and away their most sequential film to date, is an incorrigible delight, from the moment the three Wise Men first stop off at the wrong crib to the grand finale of a rosy mass crucifixion with one of the victims, Mr Frisbee III (Eric Idle), encouraging Brian (Graham Chapman) and the rest to join him in a lilting, foot-tapping ditty called 'Always Look on the Bright Side of Life'. One has heard of cross-talk but this is ridiculous, triumphantly so. And if it means we shall never have to sit through another *King of Kings* or *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, as it surely must, that's a bonus blessing. Already adumbrated in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and *Jabberwocky* (the latter a Gillian and Palin enterprise), the trouble taken over how the movie looks – which is impressively gritty and authentic, following in Zeffirelli's footsteps in Tunisia – pays off a hundredfold in stepping up the surrealist potency of the comedy. Keaton knew all about this.

Written by all the lads – Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Idle, Terry Jones and Michael Palin – over a hair-tearing year-and-a-half, and directed by Jones, this wildest story ever told runs a gamut from fourth-form snook-cocking through inspired, tangential lunacies and fine parodies of the Christ-movie genre right up to high satire (the rival Jewish sects of the time, for instance, could be today's protocol-pernickety splinter-groups of the extreme left). After the Magi's pre-credit mix-up, three titles succeed one another: JUDEA AD 33, SATURDAY AFTERNOON, and ABOUT TEA-TIME. A gentle Jesus is briefly glimpsed and barely heard speaking from a hilltop. 'I think it was "Blessed are the Greek," says a distant auditor, for his neighbour's benefit. If this, and the closing crucifixions, and an ex-leper's irritation at losing his livelihood ('not so much as a by your leave,' grumbles Palin, still hopping from habit) are to be read as blasphemy – and the word can have meaning but no force for an unbeliever – then hurray for blasphemy. The film digs a deep trap for the more rabid Festivaliers of Light and that's me finished on the subject.

Back at the plot, Brian Cohen, grown to manhood and a seller of such delicacies as others' noses at the arena, has just discovered his dad was a Roman and is angrily ripe to join Reg (John Cleese) and his People's Front of Judas. From there on, it's only a series of wonderful stumbles towards Brian's being adopted as a reluctant Messiah, condemned by Pilate to 'crucifixion' and that magically absurd, up-beat ending.

The cast-of-thousands is played by some 999 locals plus half-a-dozen actual actors and the Python six doing everyone who matters, in assorted beards, frocks and wigs. Among others, Eric Idle crops up as Mr Cheeky, Stan (called Loretta, a confessed revolutionary) and Harry the Haggler (bread and stone salesman). On their way to a lapidation, Brian and his mum Mandy (Terry Jones) buy from the last 'two points, two flats and a packet of gravel'. Later on, Pilate – having reduced a Passover mob to tears of mirth by his 'w's – compounds the error by bringing on his effeminate friend Biggus Dickus (Chapman): 'This man wanks as high as any man in Wome'. Biggus has trouble with his 's's and the crowd is last seen rolling on the ground in glee. Which is where the event, in a less packed cinema, would have left me. Congratulations to our censor for a thoroughly sensible certificate. 'Fuck off!' yells Brian at his importunate followers. An instant's pause, then, 'Tell us, Lord, how shall we fuck off?' they intone. In a week of 'X's, it's cheering to find this passed 'AA' or for Almost Anyone.

Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train* seems likely to remain unchallenged when it comes to filming the obsessional thrillers of Patricia Highsmith. Wim Wenders's *The American Friend* played strange games with Ripley and now Claude Miller, whose 1976 *The Best Way to Walk* proved a fascinating directoral debut after working as Truffaut's assistant on eight films, comes before us with a sadly inert and misguided adaptation of Miss Highsmith's *This Street Sickness*, which depended enormously on our privileged knowledge of the hero's mental processes to make its effect. Miller's second movie has, in fact, been hanging around for two years and one can see why. David, the mad, brilliant chemical engineer of the novel is transplanted to a small French provincial town and a dull job as an accountant. His secret is his overpowering certainty that a childhood sweetheart, Lise (Dominique Laffin, of whom little is demanded and as much delivered), has married misguidedly and will soon be his.

Pretending to visit his parents at weekends, he really goes to a mountain chalet lovingly prepared for the big day. At his lodgings, Juliette (Miou Miou) falls for him and disinters some of his double life. A loutish married friend, Francois, also gets into the act. David, leadenly walked through by Gérard Depardieu, is half-responsible for the death of Lise's husband, entirely so for the killings of the two women. Claude Miller is responsible for an outrageously tricksy new ending, which has the clock literally turned back and David and his Lise flying upwards from a swimming bath to a fantasised happiness. Miou Miou is enchanting (one kept wanting to take her away from all this) and Claude Piéplu, superb in *The Best Way to Walk*, imports further jarring reality in a beautiful cameo as David's concierge.

Joanne Woodward picked up an Oscar for *The Three Faces of Eve* and presumably on the old Hollywood basis that you can't have too much of a good thing she now co-stars in another multiple-personality melodrama, again based on the best selling account of a true case-history by Flora Rheta Schreiber. In *Sybil*, Miss Woodward is the sympathetic psychiatrist this time round, amazingly free of other patients for one so clearly tops at her job. Sally Field, and she fields around five of the 16 different roles her character takes refuge in, plays the all-demanding mess of the title. It turns out there are several very nasty things in the woodshed of her childhood, not the least of which is a horror-comic mother, a ghoul revisited in flashback. Daniel Petris directs with possibly too much relish for the beastly (button-hooks, a maimed moggie, enemies), but the result is pretty compulsive viewing and there are two outstanding performances from the principals. Sally Field appears positively to shrink in her more infantile manifestations and her false-soignée 'Vicky' is ice-curlingly credible and pathetic.

Devotees of the 'new' Australian cinema who wish to keep their illusions intact should give George Miller's *Mad Max* a miss. Sounding dubbed into American, for reasons not unguessable, it *looks* like a wretched splicing-together of some of the crasser notions current in American movies a while back and now largely, mercifully discarded. In some near future, psycopathic bikies with names like The Nightrider, the Toecutter, Mudguts and Lobotomy Eyes war with psychopathic cops with names like Jim Goose and, of course, Max (who has a little son called Sprog, but not for long). Start signing up, rather, for the 23rd London Film Festival, a bumper 18 days of films from over 30 countries beginning on 15 November. The nascent cinemas of Asia and Africa are emphasised; there are the latest works of Fellini, Wajlu, Rohmer, Jancsó, Frederick Tineman and John Huston; the New British Cinema gets 11 programmes to itself, somehow.

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Theatre – 2

Paul Allen

Midlands Grass

The Wicked Cooks by GÜNTER GRASS translated by A. Leslie Willson and adopted by David Porter *Birmingham Rep Studio.*

The British theatre is so unpractised in the Absurdist tradition that we – performers, critics, audiences alike – tangle with it at our peril. We don't do it often enough to be able to do it well; we don't do it very well so we don't do it very often. It is a tribute to our insularity the *The Wicked Cooks*, by Günter Grass, has taken 20 years to get here from its Berlin opening, and no surprise that Bill Pryde's production in the Birmingham Rep Studio (until 24 November) is only intermittently impressive.

The play deals with a group of cooks who, when not squabbling ill-naturedly among themselves, are trying to get from a man they call the Count (he isn't one) a recipe for cabbage soup that may save their establishment and their jobs. When we are told that it is a grey soup made of cabbage mixed with ashes (it doesn't matter what the ashes are of) the whiff of symbolism becomes more acrid. And Grass follows it up. One cook lets it be known that the cooks stand for all their profession, for the whole future of gastronomy and possibly humankind as well. In the end the Count says there is no recipe: 'It is an experience, a change of knowledge, a way of living.' He and the girl passed onto him by one of the cooks as an inducement go into their idyllic country cottage, and there are two shots. The goldfish in his pond has been destroyed too.

Who or what the Count is remains obscure. God? The ruling class? The spirit of humanism? The tree of knowledge? It doesn't really matter. Altogether more bizarre, and perhaps the most absurd thing about the whole evening, is the internal debate offered the audience in the form of a trumpet, wielded by the chief cook and briefly wrested from him by a rival.

At least, everyone calls it a trumpet. In fact it's a cornet and may even be a toy one at that. Is that significant, or does no-one care about the difference? Do the actors not actually play it (taped sounds take its place) because they can't or because we are being offered a sort of a allegory? Why is it actually sounded just once? Why am I getting obsessed with a toy cornet?

My guess is that it's not just a badge of culinary office but an all-purpose prop in the broad light entertainment tradition. At one point an actor hesitantly uses it as a telescope. One of the key things about the European Absurdists, as I understand them, is that they regard themselves as a branch of popular entertainment, and Bill Pryde's production works best when it adopts this view. It does so, dynamically, at the opening when characters are choreographed (by Tamara McLorg) almost tumbling onto the glossy black-and-white check set (by Geoff Rose) behind huge cut-outs of familiar kitchen objects while the lighting (by Charlie Paton) changes gaudily and dramatically. This sort of thing doesn't happen often, and the bulk of the acting is Midlands naturalistic in style, which serves – contrarily – to intellectualise the piece. Only Roy Barraclough, the familiar television comic punchbag of Les Dawson, lets his broad comic skills flower fully, as if he were stuck in a rather duff sketch which needed rescuing if he wanted to get out of one of our rougher variety theatres intact; the character, again contrarily perhaps, becomes not only the most comic but when necessary the most sinister and most persuasive around. There's a lesson in there.

Weekend Competition

No 2591 **Set by Fatboy**

You are *so* lucky: I can't think what you have done to deserve it. We haven't even started dishing out the Piles for 2589, and here comes Lady Bountiful again. Thanks to the debulliating generosity of Granada Books, we are offering copies of *Mrs Byrne's Dictionary of Unusual, Obscure and Preposterous Words* with this comp. Eight lines of verse, please, containing at a rate of one per line the following words: *firkin, scaurous, tath, tête-bêche, lotophagous, estaminet, debulliate, aristology.* Of course, if they aren't in your dictionary, you'll just have to buy a *Mrs Byrne*, won't you? By 23 November.

Result of No 2588 **Set by Gladys Over**

We asked for applications from famous literary figures for the post of Deputy Literary Editor at the NS.

Report **by Fatboy**

If I were The Lemon Kid I'd put the lemon on all the Wilde and Johnson entries; but as I'm just Fatboy, well, they fell off the edge of my desk into the shredder by accident, didn't they? Oh, and Henry James fell off as well. (It's for your own good, really: you'd just get stale parodying the same people time and again.) Note the laudable range of our winners. Runners-up were Abu Abu for his Yuan Chen and D. H. M. Cook for his Mme de Staël – which closed stylishly with 'As for my languages, you need have no fear, and that includes the language of the heart'. One pound to him, two to George Cowley, seven the rest. The final Thompson (ta very much, Macmillan) to Tim Hopkins.

A monkey was once employed as editor of a weekly magazine. His job was to keep jungle-dwellers informed of what was happening in their own, and other people's jungles. To help him gather news and write articles, the monkey chose other monkeys whose opinions and views closely resembled his own. Some years later the monkey left the magazine to work in an altogether different sort of jungle, and a baboon was chosen to replace him. The baboon worked for a while with the remaining monkeys, but it soon became apparent that he preferred the ideas and company of other baboons. It was no surprise then, when other monkeys left the magazine, that the baboon replaced them with his own kind. In no time at all the magazine was written, produced – and even read – by baboons, thus demonstrating that it is *unwise to throw good monkeys out with the bad monkeys' bathwater.*

I think the Literary Department would benefit enormously from having a perspicacious Greek slave about the place. *Aesop.*

TIM HOPKINS

My dear Sir, I have some Latin, less Greek, demotic German, military Dutch and a collection of theological paradoxes that I can twirl around with wit and popish venom. I am a man of parts . . . adequately endowed with skin, hair, fat, flesh, veins, arteries, ligaments, nerves, bones, cartilages, marrow, brains, glands, genitals and articulations . . . a Being of nice constituents and handsome configuration, who will not excite repugnance in the most fastidious member of your staff.

I can toss off learned but modestly literate prolegomena to the severest subject at short shout . . . or if the spectacular is seriously preferred, cough stained glass windows of shimmering, azure phlegm like the greatest bullyboy in Christendom. Believe me Sir, my dialectical stuff has not been surpassed since the Slawkenbergius Essay on the Origin of Life, often referred to by the erudite Mr Shandy as PRIMUS EJACULATUM or THE FIRST SQUIRT.

Your respectful Servant, Laurence Sterne.

RUSSELL LUCAS

I think, therefore I am suitable. *Descartes.*

GEORGE COWLEY

Sir, It is little that I repair to the bookshops of the Southron folk; I am more like to loiter beside old Jacob's barrow of second-hand books, pitched betwixt the Haymarket and Charing Cross. I joy to see him laugh in the morning's eyes – to see him triumph and sadden with all weather. In the rash lustihood of my young powers once more I pull my life upon me, grimed with smears as I am, and upon a flyleaf torn from one of old Jacob's time-ravaged volumes I here write to propose myself as Deputy Literary Editor of your weekly.

Dank thoughts shiver upon the sighful branches of my mind. 'Wherefore should any set thee to the task? How hast thou merited?' I only plead, outlaw-wise, that I love language and need literature. It is a dependence to which no shame attaches – the sole one that will save and not destroy me.

Yours, Francis Thompson.

STANLEY SHAW

Sir, As there is a new office of deputie needed, the old standard burst and a new made, I crave the boone of being reckoned.

I am a most rigid man for order, by nature endowed with all the criticks' tricks of sweete finenesse in letters. I have the mysteries of wit, the valuations and alloyed mixtures of the same.

Marrie, my muse is one can tread the air to serve my Say-master.

I have read and weighted yr broadsheet, untwisted every thread and know the woofe and warpe thereof. Right soft and smoothe as creame it reads.

The sagacious, enlightened, nay, GENIUSED judges of yr Majestic Comp Chambers do present, as it were spun by nature, a glorious web of poesy and prose:

Where readers strive with divers pre-sette chores
More for thy patronage than for a cause.

So will you gain a liegeman and a muse if you'll but grant me office.

Yr servant, Ben Jonson.

GERRY HAMILL

Sir, Prior to photographing a delightfully innocent child of the feminine persuasion, a copy of your journal peeped from beneath her vest, whence a thoughtful parent had placed it, knowing my habits and the chill of the studio.

I note that the post of Deputy Literary Editor is about to fall vacant. On canvassing my friends – intelligent girls all – I understand he is responsible for overseeing the Weekend Competition.

I am, I believe I speak humble, eminently suitable. I have produced many pieces of nonsense, puzzles, acrostics, pastiche, parody and fun, in both prose and verse. I have at my command, in addition to photographic techniques, Mathematics, Symbolic Logic, and, should it be necessary, can call upon Divine training to judge the issues of the day, be they police brutality or white bread.

I beg to sign myself Charles L. Dodgson, though all my literary work appears under the name,

Lewis Carroll

ROY KELLY.

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Tony Miles

Chess

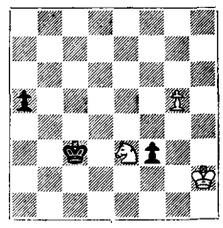
No. 154 **Rio Recap**

The second Interzonal tournament, held in Rio de Janeiro, produced a dramatic finish. With only a few rounds to go GMs Portisch and Hübner seemed absolutely safe qualifiers, having a clear lead and the easiest opposition left, with the ex-world champion Petrosian 90 per cent sure of the third place. It was then that the Dutch GM Timman began a remarkable spurt. In rapid succession he disposed of Smejkul, Sax and Vaganian. Meanwhile his rivals all faltered. Hübner was exceedingly fortunate to survive an adjournment only a pawn down against the lowly-placed Harandi. Portisch, with first place at his mercy, was crushed with White by Kagan who had previously amassed just five half points from his first sixteen games. Petrosian was taking too many draws for comfort.

In the last round Portisch had Black against Shamkovic, Petrosian had Black against Ivkov and Timman had White against the out-of-form Garcia, with Hübner a relatively happy spectator. Suddenly Petrosian seemed the outsider of the quartet. Having learned his lesson from Kagan, Portisch played safe with a short draw in the final round. Meanwhile Timman's position was beginning to fall apart, and Petrosian's first looked good, then bad, then good again. Then almost simultaneously, Timman produced a coup to turn the tables and Ivkov found a resource to reach a drawn ending. The reporters had scarcely got out their pens to change their articles when the Yugoslav, in time trouble, blundered and converted his hopelessly drawn position into a hopelessly lost one. Both games were adjourned and now a four-way play-off looked certain, but the surprises were still not over. On closer examination it was discovered that Timmans penultimate move had been a blunder and Garcia now had a saving resource, which, given a night and a team of Russian analysts, he duly discovered. Ivkov resigned without resuming and so Timman's bid narrowly failed.

Of the three qualifiers, undoubtedly Portisch produced the best chess, and deservedly took first place on tie-break. But for three losses, all with White against weaker players, he would have won by a large margin. Hübner played well for the first half but then lost his touch a little. Petrosian, in stark contrast, scarcely played at all. To describe his play as 'practical' would be both flattery and a gross understatement. In the whole tournament he produced just two games of any substance. He was the only undefeated player, and of course he has a profound understanding of the game, but, to the chess lover, that he should qualify for the Candidates with this sort of performance is little short of tragic. I shall annotate some games next week.

Problem 154



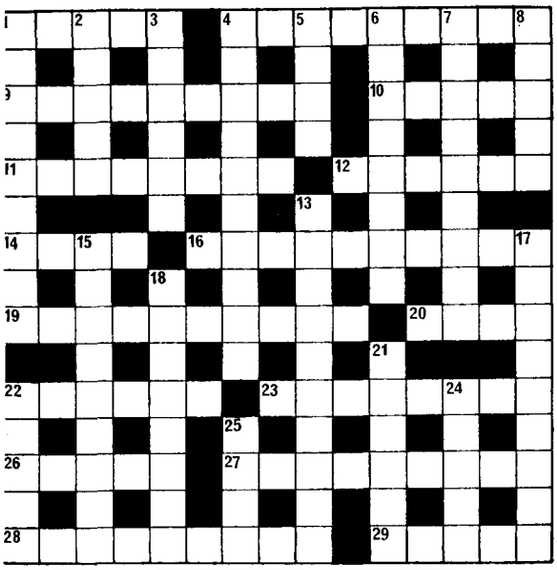
Black to play. Should he continue with a) . . . P-R5, b) . . . K-Q5, c) . . . K-Q6 or d) . . . K-Q7? Analysis of all four please to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 21 November.

Solution to problem 152

1.K-N5! (1.K-K5, K-Q2!=) . . . K-B2; 2.K-R6, K-N1; 3.P-R4, K-R1; 4.K-R5! K-N1; 5.K-N4, K-B1; 6.K-B4, K-K1; 7.K-N5!(7.K-K4? K-Q2=) . . . K-B2; 8.K-B5, K-K2; 9.K-K5, K-Q2; 10.K-B6, K-B3; 11.K-N7, K-N4; 12.KxP, KxP; 13.P-R5, P-N4; 14.P-R6, P-N5; 15.K-N7! P-N6; 16.P-R7, P-N7; 17.P-R8=Q, P-N8=Q; 18.Q-R8 + K moves; 19.Q-N8 + and so QxQ.

Weekend Crossword 1322

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1322, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 20 November.



ACROSS

1 Vote for making fruit soft (5).
4 Puzzle which makes a fish queer holding a chaste woman (9).
9 Bird which keeps watch beside pool, we hear (9).
10 Quarrel in which fighting is back in the middle (5).
11 Place to take artist to in romantic tale (8).
12 Exceptionally holding it to be truth (6).
14 Charity needed when hands are penniless (4).
16 The sport of running after somewhere to live? (10).
19 Academic job for mate with sea-going vessel (10).
20 Glance amorously, being seen in fog less clearly (4).
22 'Smiles in such a sort, As if he — himself' (*J. Caesar*) (6).
23 All is not wrong for an animal (8).
26 Animal which has a single horn (5).
27 One to hold an Italian back as a lover (9).
28 Town which is wise about rearranging an event (9).
29 Played — and you are held by backward point (5).

DOWN

1 Fish with a stick for something plain (9).
2 Pronounce extreme (5).
3 Positive impressions? (6)
4 The spirit in the game is unfaltering (10).
5 Requirement in nine editions out of ten (4).
6 Superior person even if his lover deserts him (8).
7 Comprehending that dinner is not started in getting up from table (9).
8 A graduate unprofessional in language (5).
13 Ripe tastes evolve a revealing exhibition (10).
15 Mineral for man carrying a little note (9).
17 Manager without experience on the board (9).
18 Earlier part of America held in grip of iron (8).
21 Nearly a learner in splitting atoms (6).
22 Assesses currency (5).
24 Where the layabout is after it (5).
25 Back the morning I left the city (4).

SETSQUARE

Solution to Salamanca 23

B	R	I	S	T	O	L	M	I	L	K	O	
S	E	A	L	T	F	E	B	L	O	O	D	
T	I	M	O	N	F	M	A	L	A	M	O	
E	M	B	O	S	S	E	R	I	V	A	N	
A	P	U	M	U	H	E	N	A	E	V	T	
T	O	S	S	P	O	T	A	D	D	I	O	
O	S	H	A	C	R	H	U	B	A	R	B	
P	E	J	L	A	E	E	T	A	N	U	L	
Y	A	U	P	S	T	R	O	B	I	L	A	
G	E	N	E	T	O	C	V	O	C	E	S	
I	N	T	E	G	R	A	N	D	U	N	T	
A	N	A	N	C	Y	P	R	E	T	T	Y	

Prizewinners to Salamanca 23

Vera McIntyre, Vancouver
Miss Eveleigh, Bristol
C. T. Milner, Huddersfield

Accom. Vacant

LOOMSBURY: Quiet room, all facilities shared, £17.50 per week. Pied-à-terre? Box 6984.

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HENFIELD, Mod. furn. flat, suit couple. Avail. mid Nov. to end Jan. 432 6327 (day), 366 2934 (eve).

Accom. Wanted

UNIV. LECTURER (male, non-smoker), sks flat/studio/bedsit./pied-à-terre central or west London. Full time rental sought but weekday only basis also consid. Box 6797.

YET ANOTHER University lecturer & wife seek s/c. 1-bedrm flat, London. Box 6976.

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POSTGRADUATES and first degree students require rooms, flats, houses, often for 9 or 12 months only. Ring London University, 01-405 7686 ext. 468 mornings preferred or 607 and 411 anytime.

VERNON SCANNELL seeks accommodation anywhere. The King's School, Canterbury. Telephone 58953.

Holidays/ Travel

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APPOINTMENTS

Amnesty International

requires

A Library Assistant

for its **Documentation Centre**

to assist in the day to day running of the library. Experience in working with periodicals and general reader services desirable. Typing essential. Foreign languages an advantage.

Experienced Secretary

for the researcher on South Asia. Knowledge of the area would be an advantage.

Salary for both posts £4,605.75. Closing date: **21 November 1979.** For an application form contact **The Personnel Office, Amnesty International, 10 Southampton Street, London WC2E 7NF. Telephone 01-836 7788, ext. 289.**

UNION OF
SHOP, DISTRIBUTIVE AND ALLIED WORKERS

Applications are invited for vacancies in the following departments at the Union's Central Office, Manchester:—

(a) RESEARCH

The appointee will have special responsibility for the collation and maintenance of records relating to wages and conditions of work, the preparation of wage claims and briefs on industrial and other issues. An ability to write analytically and concisely is essential. Some previous work experience and knowledge of trade union activities desirable.

Salary—£3,939 p.a. progressing to £4,662 p.a.

(b) LEGAL

The department provides a legal advice and assistance service to the whole of the Union's membership. In addition to participation in the general work of the department, including the preparation of claims and the compilation of reports, the appointee will represent members before Social Security Tribunals. A knowledge of Industrial Law and Social Security legislation is desirable.

Salary—£3,618 p.a. progressing to £3,939 p.a.

35-hour working week. Up to five weeks annual holiday according to service. Superannuation scheme. Salaries presently under review.

Applications (Male/Female) stating position applied for to:— H. L. Booth, Administration Officer, USDAW, 188 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 6LJ.

POEU

POST OFFICE ENGINEERING UNION

Administrative Officer

£6,960 - £7,122 per annum

The Union is creating a new staff post of Administrative Officer. Applications are invited from people with a thorough and extensive knowledge of office methods and organisation and who would be capable of managing efficiently a trade union office of between 60 and 70 staff, in addition to providing office services at Conferences. Applications are invited from people with the above qualifications who also have a knowledge of and commitment to the trade union movement. The Union's Head Office is situated near Hanger Lane Central Line Underground Station. The conditions of service include flexible hours, subsidised canteen, 30 working days leave and contributory superannuation scheme.

Write for further details and application form to: **General Treasurer, Post Office Engineering Union, Greystoke House, 150 Brunswick Road, Ealing, W5 1AW.**

Closing date: **Friday 23 November 1979.**

CIIR OVERSEAS VOLUNTEERS

NORTH YEMEN

Programme coordinator

required by CIIR to administer its existing volunteer programme and evaluate small-scale community development projects. Previous middle-eastern experience and/or experience in this field in third world or United Kingdom an advantage. Couples wishing to work on a job sharing basis welcome to apply.

Post is on volunteer terms. Accommodation, living and other allowances are provided. Intensive language training. Applications should be made in writing to: **CIIR (Overseas Volunteers), 1 Cambridge Terrace, London NW1. Tel: 01-487 4397.**

NACRO

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

WEST MIDLANDS CONSULTATIVE GROUPS

(Housing & Residential Services for Offenders)

We are looking for a person with knowledge of the housing needs of offenders and/or experience of special needs accommodation project development to work with voluntary and statutory agencies in the West Midlands to improve and extend provision for homeless offenders. In several parts of the county we are also establishing inter-agency groups to improve local co-ordination.

The appointment will be for 2 years and is funded by the Barrow & Geraldine S. Cadbury Trust.

Salary £6,305.
Further details and application forms: Mr R. Beech, NACRO, 169 Clapham Road, London SW9. 01-582 6500. Closing date 17 November.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE CARE AND RESETTLEMENT OF OFFENDERS

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SELLY OAK, BIRMINGHAM

Appointment of Principal

Applications are invited for the post of Principal. The College has been reconstituted and will open in September 1980 with full support from statutory and voluntary bodies in adult education. It will offer one-year residential courses of liberal studies to men and women to help them to develop their personal capacities and to play a more responsible part in the community. The post of Principal will be a key one in achieving the College's aims. It is hoped that the Principal will be available to take a full part in essential work before the College opens.

Salary at an appropriate point within a range equivalent to Burnham FE Principal Group 3 (at present £10,110-£10,815).

The Principal will be expected to live on the premises. A modern four-bedroomed house is available rent free.

Further particulars from **the Chairman, Staffing Committee, Fircroft College, Selly Oak, Birmingham 29 (021-472 0116).** Applications (with names of three referees) from UK by **7 December;** from overseas by **31 December 1979.**

THE LABOUR RESEARCH DEPT

has a vacancy for a

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

to work mainly in the field of industrial relations dealing especially with employment conditions and pay.

A relevant degree or comparable qualification will be an advantage, as will experience of the trade union movement.

Salary £5,000 p.a. (to increase from January review date), 35 hours, 5 weeks 2 days annual holiday. Written application, with names of 2 referees to reach **the Secretary, Labour Research, 78 Blackfriars Rd, London SE1 8HF by 16 November.**

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UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

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Applications are invited for

HALLSWORTH FELLOWSHIPS

in advanced work in the field of Political Economy (including Industry and Public Administration). Value within the range £4,333-£12,862 p.a. according to experience and qualifications.

Further particulars and application forms (returnable by 3 December) are obtainable from the Registrar, The University, Manchester M13 9PL and enquiries about the scope of the Fellowships are welcomed. *Please quote ref: 229/79/NS and* state for which Fellowship details are required.

THE BRITISH INSTITUTE of Recorded Sound (national sound archive) seeks temporary clerical help. Accuracy and neat handwriting essential, some experience of handling records and knowledge of music useful. Full or part time by arrangement. Telephone Mrs Tamburrini 589 6603 for further details or write to 29 Exhibition Road, London SW7.

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Please enclose a s.a.e. if you want a receipt.

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Theatres

ALDWYCH (Royal Shakespeare Company). 836 6404. Recorded bkg info 836 5332. Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman's 'Once in A Lifetime', Gorky's 'Children of The Sun' and 'Measure for Measure'. See daily press for dates and times. RSC also at The Warehouse in Howard Brenton's 'Sore Throats', Pam Gems' 'Piaf' and Peter Whelan's 'Captain Swing'.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 'Uncle Vanya' by Anton Chekhov. A New Version by Pam Gems. Previews from 22 November at 8 p.m. Box Office: 722 9301.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. 'Amadeus', 'As You Like It', 'For Services Rendered', 'Death of a Salesman', Candleford & 'Lark Rise'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

ROYAL COURT. 730 1745. Mon.-Sat. 8 p.m. World premiere of David Lan's 'Sergeant Ola and His Followers'. 'Attention grabbing . . . fascinating . . . seductive'. Guardian.

NEW END. 794 0238. 'Ionescopade' — a musical show. Tues.-Suns 8 p.m. (Fri. 9th 7 p.m.).

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"Hilarious . . . See it!" (S.Times)

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Children's lives from the industrial revolution in Britain to the Third World today.

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Literary

MATCHLIGHT: British Poetry Today. Orangery, Holland Pk. 8 Nov. 7.15 p.m. David Gascoyne + Edward Storey, Rossetti interludes. 01-352 7409.

Meetings

FRENCH INSTITUTE, Queensberry Place, SW7 (South Ken. tube). Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Professeur au Collège de France: 'L'amour et L'Argent en France Méridionale' Monday 19 November at 6.15 p.m. Entrance free. Tel. 589 6211 ext. 38.

TOWARDS SELF-REALIZATION

Free Public Lectures on Theosophy
Sunday 11 November 1979 at 7p.m.
THE ROYAL ROAD
Mr James Sturzaker
The Theosophical Society in England
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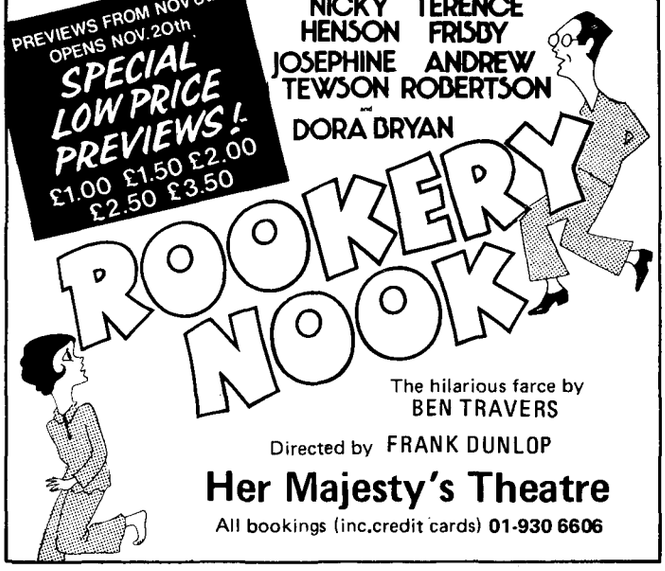

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by Professor C. M. Schmittoff

3 one-hour lectures at the Gresham College, Basinghall Street, EC4 at 6 p.m.

15, 22 & 29 November.

ADMISSION FREE

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by Professor C. W. Kilmister

3 one-hour lectures at The City University, Northampton Square, EC1 at 6 p.m.

12, 19 & 26 November.

ADMISSION FREE

TONY BENN MP. 'Beyond Regret', Labour's Economic Record in the 1970s. Old Board Room, LSE, Houghton St., Tuesday 13 November at 8 p.m. Organised by the Young Fabians. All welcome.

CUTS—CHAOS—CRISES. The Socialist Alternative. Thurs. 15 Nov. 8 p.m. Public Rally, Abbey Community Centre, Belsize Rd, NW6 (corner Abbey Rd). The Socialist Party of Great Britain.

DEFENCE OF LITERATURE and the Arts Society Annual General Meeting. Wed. 14 Nov. 6 p.m. Grand Committee Room, House of Commons. Lord Goodman will speak on censorship.

THEOSOPHY. S.a.e. for pamphlets, book list, programme. Sun. 11 Nov. 8 p.m. Q/A Meeting. Wed. 14 Nov. 7.30 p.m. Commemoration. 'The Theosophical Movement'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The School of Education will be offering the following taught courses during the academic year 1980/81:

Diploma in the Education of Young Children

(One year full time)

This course is designed to offer experienced practitioners the opportunity of preparing themselves for responsible posts concerned with educational provision for children between three and nine years of age. A basic course in Child Psychology will be illustrated by studies within: Preschool Play Group Movement; Nursery Schools and first Schools.

Diploma in Primary Education and Diploma in Remedial/Compensatory Education

(One year full time)

These courses are designed for experienced serving teachers and lecturers in Colleges of Education. They are based on a common core of educational studies including an examination of current educational theory and its curriculum implications. In addition there are separate and more specialised studies in any one of the following areas: Language Development; Reading and the Curriculum; Mathematics, Science and the Curriculum; Drama; Environmental and Social Studies. All students study the problems of compensatory education within the context of their general studies.

Master of Arts in Education

(One year full time)

The course for the MA involves the theoretical study of three aspects of education and the degree is awarded on the basis of performance in a written examination. Options available are as follows: Comparative Education; Drama in Education; Educational Law and Administration; Further Education; Guidance and Counselling; History of Education; Philosophy of Education; Psychology of Education; Science and Mathematics in Education; Sociology of Education; Physical Education.

Primary School Mathematics Course

(One year full time)

This course is a one term full time in-service course for teachers. It is designed primarily for teachers in infant and junior schools who are prepared to investigate recent developments in mathematics, mathematics projects in schools and the assessment of performance in mathematics and to analyse some of the implications of these developments for teaching and learning mathematics, particularly in primary schools.

Further details may be obtained from the Secretary, School of Education, Leazes Road, Durham DH1 1TA.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON, Gower St, WC1E 6BT. Lunch-Hour Lectures, 1.20 to 2. 13 Nov. 'Three Mile Island Revisited — Consequences of the US Nuclear Power Station Accident' by Dr J. Lewins; 15 Nov. 'You Hide Me' Film directed by Kwate Nee Owoo, 1975. 'Breaking the Boundaries'. Film directed by Jim Pines, 1977.

16-18: THE FEMALE CUL-DE-SAC. Education and Career Training for Girls and Women. Fawcett Society Symposium at the London School of Economics, Houghton Street, WC2, 17 November 9.45 to 16.45. Fee £5. Chairman: Baroness Sear. Speakers: Renee Short, MP; Derek Roberts, Research Director GEC; Eileen Byrne, Author EEC Byrne Report. Workshops on silicon chips, job choice, training, later opportunities. First class s.a.e. to 15 Murdoch Road, Wokingham, Berks RG11 2DG for information and applications. Alternatively, on day, at door.

ICA EVENTS, The Mall, SW1. 11 Nov. 5.00 David Lusted and Jim Cook discuss 'Representations of Childhood in Television and Film'. 13 Nov. 7.30 Gavin Stamp talks on 'The Real Architecture of the 30s', accompanying the Arts Council/V & A exhibition at the Hayward. 14 Nov. 7.00 'Changing Representations' — A discussion on ways of changing dominant modes of 'childhood' representation in film. 15 Nov. 1.00 Bernard Levin on his new book 'Taking Sides'. 7.30 Ken Kiff and Paul Butler discuss the 'Narrative Paintings' exhibition. 80p. 930 3647.

Conferences

EDUCATION UNDER ATTACK. 2nd Education Conference organised jointly by Rank & File Teacher and The Socialist Teachers' Alliance. Aims: 1. To develop educational arguments and ideas necessary to defend education against the growing offensive. 2. To prepare for action in the fightback against the Tory government's attack on education. Sat. 10 Nov. 10 a.m.-5.15 p.m. Sun. 11 Nov. 10.15 a.m.-1.00 p.m. Starcross School, Risinghill Street, London NW1. *Contributors include:* Stuart Hall, Caroline Benn, Dick North, Nigel Wright.

Political Studies Association and Social Science Research Council

GRADUATE STUDENTS CONFERENCE

13-15 DECEMBER 1979

The fifth annual PSA Graduates' Conference will take place at the London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London, WC2. The main aim of the Conference is to give post-graduate students an opportunity to discuss the practical problems and theoretical perspectives of their work both amongst themselves and with established figures in the discipline. All graduate students in politics and closely allied subjects are welcome, but the PSA is particularly anxious that first year graduates about to undertake thesis work should attend.

Guest speakers include:
Hugh Berrington
Ken Minogue
Neil Harding
Susan Strange
Ivor Crewe
Richard Hodder-Williams
George Philip
Sammy Finer

The cost is £19.80 including food and accommodation at Carr Saunders Hall and £12.50 for participants making their own arrangements for accommodation and breakfast.

For further details and applications to attend, write to **George Philip, LSE, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE.**

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ANNIVERSARY OF UDI

Assemble 1.30 p.m. Speakers' Corner — Sunday Nov 11th Hyde Park Corner

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